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HISTORY
OF
THE HOLY BIBLE.

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A
HISTORY
OF
THE HOLY BIBLE,

FROM THE

Beginning of the World to the Establishment of Christianity;

WITH

ANSWERS TO INFIDEL OBJECTIONS, DISSERTATIONS ON THE MOST REMARKABLE PASSAGES
AND MOST IMPORTANT DOCTRINES,

AND

A CONNECTION OF THE PROFANE WITH THE SACRED WRITINGS.

BY THE REV. THOMAS STACKHOUSE, A. M.

LATE VICAR OF BEENHAM IN BERKSHIRE.

THE WHOLE CORRECTED AND IMPROVED,

AND

DEDICATED, BY PERMISSION, TO

His Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury,

BY

THE RIGHT REV. GEORGE GLEIG, LL.D. F.R.S.E. F.S.S.A.

ONE OF THE BISHOPS OF THE SCOTCH EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

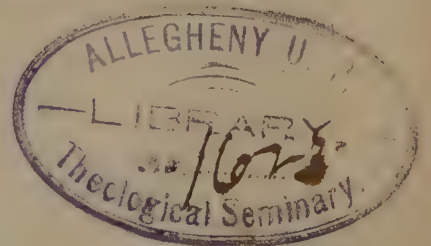
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INTRODUCTION

TO THE

HISTORY

OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

[WE have now brought the History of the several dispensations of revealed religion, down from the beginning of the world, to the coming of that seed of the woman, through whom our first parents were assured that mankind should recover all that had been forfeited by their shameful fall. Of these dispensations, the last and the most perfect that we have hitherto considered, was the Mosaic; but we are now to exhibit even that dispensation as giving way to another, which was to embrace, not a few families like the patriarchal, nor a single nation like the Jewish, but all the nations of the earth. Such a dispensation had been repeatedly promised to Abraham and his posterity as the completion of their own, and as the last that was to be vouchsafed to man; and it is indeed evident, that only when the consequences of the fall should be removed, and mankind restored to their forfeited inheritance, the objects of revealed religion would be fully attained. This was not done, nor intended to be done, by the law and ritual worship of the Jews; for these, by their very nature, were necessarily confined to one nation, and completely practicable only in one temple; but it hath been done by the Christian dispensation, which hath brought life and immortality to light, and prescribed a mode of worship which may be performed “in spirit and in truth” in every region under heaven. The Christian dispensation is therefore the last, which mankind had to expect from their Maker; and it would be even absurd to look for another, since the great scheme of Providence for which revelations were first vouchsafed to fallen man hath by it been completed. It will be shewn in the course of the ensuing History, that the death introduced into the world by the fall of Adam hath been abolished; the serpent’s head completely crushed; and Christians furnished with means, for working out their own salvation, at least as efficacious, as those which our first parents enjoyed in their paradisaical state.

But we are asked by the Deist, why, since this last and best gift of God was originally intended for fallen man, it was so long delayed? and why the Almighty, whose

power no creature can resist, was obliged to give a series of dispensations, each gradually rising in perfection above the other, instead of revealing "all his counsel" at once? Impotent and ignorant men are indeed under the necessity of accomplishing their purposes by degrees, and of frequently varying the means employed for their accomplishment, but surely He who, by a word, called the universe into existence, could have accomplished his purposes without having recourse to such expedients; he could have made man equal to the angels, and placed him at once in the same region with them, instead of subjecting him to a long and hazardous course of probation.

All this indeed seems very possible to Almighty power and Infinite wisdom; but power and wisdom are not the only attributes of God. He is a Being likewise of benevolence or goodness, of which he has given the most ample proofs in his works, and in his providential care of man even in this temporary state of probation; but would he have been equally benevolent, had such creatures as we are been omitted in his creation? He might indeed, for any thing that we know to the contrary, have filled the universe with such creatures as angels; and probably he has created as many of these exalted beings as the universe can at present contain; but it could likewise contain an order of beings a little lower than angels, and such beings are men, who are capable of enjoying much happiness even here, and, as it appears from their nature, of making, by a due use of their intellectual faculties, daily advances towards that degree of perfection to which no creature can ever fully attain. To be absolutely stationary seems to be inconsistent with the very nature of such a creature as man. It is probably inconsistent likewise with the nature of angels; for they appear to have once been in a state of probation, as we are now, from which we know that some of them fell. There is indeed reason to believe that they commenced their intellectual and moral career at a much earlier period, and from a higher station, than man commenced his;—or in other words, that they were originally more perfect than the human race; but the Divine benevolence was displayed in the creation as well of the lower as of the higher order of beings; it is displayed even in the brute creation, and in every creature that has *sense* to enjoy happiness whilst it lives.

If man was originally such a being as he is now, it is evident that he could make no progress towards perfection but under the tuition of some superior guide. It has been observed elsewhere (*a*), that not only solitary individuals, but even small tribes of savages, make no efforts to raise themselves above the state in which they are at first placed, and which appears to be very little elevated above that of the beasts that perish; and it may here be added, that great empires, when subjected to a despotic government, and bewildered by a false religion, make very slow progress in the arts and sciences of civilized society. The Chinese seem to have been almost stationary, if not retrograde, for a thousand years; and there can be no doubt but that the Brahmins of India have lost much of that science which their ancestors certainly possessed.

At his first introduction into this world, man must therefore have been utterly unable, by his own powers, to raise himself above the state of a solitary savage—and still more unable to acquire such principles, dispositions, and habits, as could fit him for the society of an order of beings far advanced beyond that degree of moral and intellectual perfection, to which, on earth, human nature can ever arrive. But because man is by nature a little lower than the angels, to whom, however, he can, under proper tuition, make gradually nearer and nearer approaches by the due cultivation of his superior faculties, does it follow that a benevolent God should have forbore to call such a creature into existence? How much more amiable doth the Creator of the universe appear in the Scriptures than in this infidel theory? Moses represents the first pair as having, from the moment of their creation, been taken under the immediate tuition of

(*a*) Introduction to the History of the Old Testament.

God, and gradually instructed, as their comparatively imperfect nature was able to receive instruction, in all that it was necessary for them to know or to practise. Had they been content to submit implicitly to such instruction, they would undoubtedly have been preserved from those pernicious errors into which their descendants so rapidly fell, and advanced, as soon as they should have been qualified for it, to that superior state which was prepared for them in heaven; but they rejected the tuition of their God, and applied elsewhere for a kind of knowledge, which they vainly hoped would make them independent of him, and able to govern themselves. This was the wayward weakness of children; and with respect to all that knowledge which is the result of reflection on what is learned by the experience of ages, children they must have been, however perfect we may suppose their natural faculties; and as wayward children they were accordingly treated. Instead of being wholly cast off by their gracious and most merciful Creator, a future deliverance was promised to them from all the evils which they had brought on themselves and their posterity; a mode of worship was prescribed, admirably calculated to point out the means by which that promise was to be fulfilled, as well as to remind them of the heinousness of their sin; and though they were turned out of the delightful garden of Eden, which by that sin they had justly forfeited, to till the ground whence they were originally taken, they were far from being left to the superintendence of the Guide which they had chosen for themselves.

As their faculties were certainly not improved by their fall, they were not then able with Moses (a) to "look up to Him who is invisible," or to perform a worship so purely rational and refined as is that of the Christian church. God was therefore graciously pleased to manifest himself occasionally to their senses, and *visibly* to direct them by the *angel* of his presence, as he appears indeed to have done in paradise (b), in every thing which related to religion. That those manifestations were frequent, and generally made at some particular place, seems evident from what passed between God and Cain (c) on the murder of Abel; and hence it probably was, that when the murderer was banished from the *presence of the Lord*, his descendants so soon degenerated into idolatry.

It is not however probable that even that family apostatized, so soon as is generally supposed, from the worship of Jehovah. The earliest idolatry appears to have been that of the heavenly host—the sun, moon, and stars; and it is very likely that the *Cainites* would at first prostrate themselves before the SUN—not as a god himself—but as such an emblem of the true God as was the *SHERINAH* manifested to the family of Seth. Lamech, the seventh from Cain, appears to have been even a religious man (d); and there is no good reason to suppose that there were not, for some time at least, many such in the same family (e). There is indeed no reason to believe, that the notions, which generally prevailed in either family, of the Divine nature and Providence, were very perfect or refined; for being all "keepers of cattle," or "tillers of the ground," then under the curse of barrenness, they could have little leisure for speculation or refinement on spiritual subjects. Many of them, as an ingenious author (f) supposes, may have been little better than *Anthropomorphites* in their conceptions of the Divine nature, as it is to be suspected that great numbers still are, even in regions blessed with the light of the glorious Gospel; and therefore it can excite no reasonable surprise, that even Almighty power and Infinite wisdom found it expedient to train them by successive dispensations, such as they were capable of receiving, till in the fulness of time they were rendered in some degree able to receive the last and best that could be vouchsafed to them. He could not indeed, by any other means that we can

(a) Heb. xi. 27.

(b) Gen. iii. 8, 9, 10.

(c) Gen. iv. 3—17.

(d) See *Patrick* on Gen. iv.

(e) See *Bishop Horsley's* Dissertation prefixed to his Sermons on our Lord's Resurrection, together with his Sermon on the Descent of Christ into Hell.

(f) *Bishop Law* in his Theory of Religion.

conceive, have rendered them at all fit to profit by the Christian dispensation, unless he had overpowered their wills and completely changed their nature; but to have overpowered their wills and to have literally changed their nature, would have been to make them quite different creatures from the human race. Such a change must have made them either angels or brutes; and in either case a chasm would have been left in the creation, to be filled up by such creatures as men now are, with all their frailties and imperfections about them.

That every method, which Divine wisdom could devise, was employed to cure them of their imperfections, is proved by the whole history of the Old Testament. Revelations were frequently made to the heads of families both before and after the general deluge; and when the children of Israel were separated from the nations around them, and taken under the immediate government of the Lord of all the earth, this distinction was not conferred on them for their own sakes *only*, but that the principles of true religion might be disseminated from them through the whole world (*a*). Their law was indeed such as to prevent them from uniting with their neighbours in that intercommunity of gods and of worship, which seems to have prevailed from the earliest ages among all polytheistic idolaters; but it did not prevent any other kind of intercourse with the heathen. They were at liberty to trade with them; and though they had no encouragement to make conquests beyond the limits of the devoted nations of Canaan, which they were commanded to expel or exterminate, they were never forbidden to defend themselves by arms when unjustly attacked by enemies of any description. The nations with which they had any intercourse, whether warlike or commercial, and they seem to have had a great deal of both during the reigns of David and Solomon, could not be altogether unacquainted with the principles of their religion; curiosity, if no better motive, would impel the most hostile of their neighbours to inquire into the truth of a religion so singular; the preaching of some of their prophets to the contiguous heathen nations; the dispersion of the Israelites through all the regions of the East, after the conquest of Samaria by Shalmaneser king of Assyria; the long captivity of the Jews in Babylon and its dependant provinces, where they were permitted to live according to their own laws; and the high estimation in which Daniel and other faithful Jews were held by Nebuchadnezzar the Great, and afterwards by Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes, when the Babylonian empire became subject to the Persian monarch, must have contributed much to diffuse the knowledge of the Divine unity through all the East. It is to be remembered too, that but a comparatively small number of the Jews returned to their own country with Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah; the greater part of them choosing to remain where they had been so long settled, and where some of them are said (*b*) to be found at this day, practising all the precepts of the law of Moses which can be practised in a strange land; that when the Persian monarchy was overthrown by Alexander, and his vast empire divided among his generals, the nation of the Jews became tributary to the Grecian dynasties of Egypt and Syria, just as one or other of those potentates became the most powerful; that during this period their Scriptures were translated into the Greek language, and thus laid open to all the learned nations of antiquity; and that they became afterwards tributary to the Roman empire at a period when Greek was perfectly understood by every Roman who had received a liberal education, and when literary curiosity was exceedingly prevalent among that warlike people.

When all these circumstances, and many others which must occur to the reflecting reader of ancient history, are duly considered, no doubt can remain, I think, in any candid mind, but that the Jews were the instruments of diffusing much religious know-

(*a*) See the Supplementary Dissertation on some of the Principle Doctrines of the Christian Religion, p. 360 of this volume.

(*b*) See *Buchanan's Christian Researches*.

ledge through the world, as well as of raising that general expectation, which, about the period of our Saviour's birth, prevailed not only in the East, but through the greater part of the Roman empire, of some great personage and mighty conqueror who was to appear immediately in the hitherto obscure and despised country of Judea. But we have seen, during the course of the preceding History, that the ultimate purposes for which the children of Israel were separated from the heathen nations, and placed under a theocratic government, were to preserve in the world the knowledge of the Divine unity, which must otherwise have been wholly lost; and to prepare the way for Him, in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed; and it appears from this concise detail, that both these purposes were served as much by the captivities and dispersions of that singular people at one period, as by their national prosperity and grandeur at another, under the reigns of their greatest monarchs, David and Solomon.

It appears, therefore, that the several dispensations of revealed religion succeeded each other in that order in which they could each be most efficacious in promoting the purpose which they were all equally intended to serve—the enlightening and improving of the human race. The supposition that it was unworthy of Him, with whom “is no variableness neither shadow of turning,” to reveal his purposes by degrees to mankind, proceeds from a notion, that Adam and Eve, because they undoubtedly came from the hands of their Creator perfectly innocent, must therefore have been endowed with more exalted faculties and even greater knowledge than any of their descendants. Had this indeed been the case, it would be very difficult to assign any reason, why God might not have revealed all his counsel at once to Adam; but in the Scriptures there is no evidence whatever that the natural faculties of the first pair were superior to those of some of their posterity, whilst it seems impossible that they could have been *created* with all that knowledge which has ever since been acquired only by *experience*. The history of their fall indicates in them no *natural* superiority over many of their descendants; in paradise they were, as well disposed children, under the conduct of an infallible guide; and when they withdrew themselves from that guide, they could be nothing else than youths probably of great natural abilities, but certainly destitute of that knowledge, which alone can conduct such creatures as we are, in safety through life. In this view of the earliest ages of the world, the only view which the writings of Moses authorise us to take of them, the Divine wisdom appears most conspicuous in the several dispensations of religion which were in succession vouchsafed to men; and perhaps the little success of those missionaries who have attempted to convert savage nations to the Christian faith, by initiating them at once into the sublimest mysteries of that faith, may be attributed to their having adopted an order of teaching directly the reverse of that by which God prepared the race at large for the reception of the sublime system of religion, to be in the fulness of time revealed to the world by that Divine Teacher, who hath brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel.

But the modern Jews here step forward, and lend their aid to the Deist in his reasoning against Christianity. They do not indeed deny, for their own sacred books declare, that many revelations were made by God to man before the era of Moses, and that the patriarchs, both before and after the flood, were under dispensations of religion in many respects different from that under which they were themselves placed by their great legislator, when he conducted their forefathers from their bondage in Egypt to the land of Canaan. They admit a gradation of dispensations, each rising in perfection above that by which it was immediately preceded; but they contend that their own, which was vouchsafed to them through the ministry of Moses, was from the beginning designed to be of all these dispensations the last and the best. They still look for a Messiah, who is to be greater than Moses or Joshua, or David or Solomon; but, according to their expectations, he is not to introduce a new form of religion, but to restore the Mosaic law to its primitive purity; to re-establish the Jews in the

assured by Ezra, or the president of the great synagogue, (one of whom is supposed to have written the three last verses of the book of Deuteronomy) that there had arisen, at the time of his writing, “no prophet in Israel, like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face;” and indeed none could be like unto him, who had not authority to give unto the people a new law or covenant of religion—who should not be, as Eusebius express it, (a) *δευτερος κατὰ Μωσέα νομοθέτης*—*a second lawgiver such as was Moses*. To have told the rebellious Israelites in *plainer terms*, that their law was only preparatory to another, would at that period, when they were so prone to idolatry, and ready on all occasions to return into Egypt, have been to defeat the very purpose for which the ritual law was given. But when those prejudices were in some degree overcome, and the veil, which was then necessarily thrown over the future reign of the Messiah, gradually removed, clearer and clearer intimations were given by the prophets, that what was peculiar to the Mosaic covenant, was by him to be done away. “Behold the days come, saith the LORD, (b) that I will make a NEW COVENANT with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord;) but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” A clearer intimation than this, that the Mosaic covenant or dispensation was to be superseded by another exactly such as we know the Christian to be, could not be expressed by words; and it was given to them, by a prophet, who some of their Rabbi’s were absurd enough to suppose, was the prophet to be raised up unto them like unto Moses, (c) and inferior only to the Messiah whom they still expect.

To that mode which, as hath been shewn, the Divine wisdom chose for diffusing through the world the first principles of true religion, and thus training mankind for the reception of him who was to fulfil all righteousness, the Jews have therefore no right to object the perpetuity of their law. In that law there is much that is of eternal obligation; much that was adopted by Moses, under the direction of the Spirit of God, from the patriarchal dispensations; much that was instituted to prefigure the future and better dispensation; and not a little that was designed merely to keep the Israelites completely separated from their idolatrous neighbours in all things that related to religious worship.

The moral part of the law of Moses has suffered no change whatever by the preaching of Christ and his apostles. It has indeed been by them disintangled from the corrupt glosses of the Jewish Pharisees, and in many instances where it was made of none effect by their traditions, restored to its primitive purity, and enforced by more powerful sanctions. In one or two instances relating to marriage and divorce, and the treatment of enemies, in which Moses was permitted to make concessions to the hardness of the people’s hearts, our Lord has restored the law to what he declares it to have been from the beginning; by the importance which he gives to the internal dispositions from which obedience to the letter of the law proceeds; and by the aid from above which he hath promised, to all who earnestly endeavour to obey it, as well as by withdrawing mens affections from the good things of this life, and directing them to those of another, as the ultimate reward of obedience to his precepts, he hath certainly exalted and refined the morality of the Gospel above that of the law of Moses; but the reflecting reader of both, will find that not one tittle of the moral law hath been repealed by the Gospel.

(a) *Demonst. Evangel.*
and xxxiv. 10.

(b) *Jerem. xxxi. 31.—34.*

(c) See *Patrick* on *Deut. xviii. 15—20.*

Such parts of the law, whether first instituted by Moses, or adopted from the patriarchs, as were intended merely to direct the attention of a gross and carnal minded people, to the coming of the long promised Messiah, and to the means by which he was to render all the families of the earth blessed, were not *abrogated* but *fulfilled* by our Lord. "Think not" says he, (a) "that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets, but to *fulfil*. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, *till all be fulfilled*." When all should be fulfilled, then surely something of the law was to pass away; so that the sense of the passage is, that as soon might heaven and earth be supposed to pass away, as one jot or one tittle of the law before it should be fulfilled or have answered its end; but all the legal sacrifices and other types, which were intended merely to prefigure the events of our Lord's life and death, were surely *fulfilled* when he had completed our redemption; and accordingly they soon afterwards passed away for ever. Before his advent they in some sense supplied his place, by directing the attention of the people towards their future redemption; and, even during the few years that he sojourned upon earth, by obtaining through their relation to that all-sufficient sacrifice which he was so soon to offer of himself, pardon of sin to the devout worshippers; but when that sacrifice was actually offered, the words *IT IS FINISHED* pronounced, and the vail of the temple rent from the top to the bottom, they were *fulfilled*, and ceased of themselves; though heaven and earth might as soon have passed away, as the obligation to observe them could have ceased before these awful events. Before the coming of Christ, their importance to the Jews may be compared to the importance of the stars in a clear sky, and of the *aurora borealis*, to the inhabitants of very northern regions, during their long night of winter. These things, in some measure, supply the place of the sun, and are of great importance to the Icelanders and natives of Greenland; but on the reappearance of the sun, they become useless, and though the stars are certainly not destroyed, nor probably the matter of the *aurora*, both cease to be visible, and seem to have passed away.

The ritual laws that were instituted merely to preserve the descendants of Israel from the contagion of the surrounding idolatry, are repeatedly declared, even by God himself, to have had no intrinsic value (b). When the Jews were completely cured of their propensity to polytheism,—to worship, together with *JEHOVAH*, *Baal*, and *Chemosh*, and all the abominations of the heathen, those laws ceased therefore to be of any importance, and were ready to vanish away of themselves. Now it is a fact, that, after their return from their captivity in Babylon to the final destruction of their church and state, they display not in a single instance the smallest tendency to those apostacies which so frequently disgraced their forefathers, and which were the occasion of their being at last subjected to that long and severe punishment. They brought indeed from the East many strange notions, which laid the foundation for those corrupt traditions, by which the Scribes and Pharisees, contrived in so many instances to make the law of God of none effect; but so far were they from falling into polytheism and idolatry, that we find numbers of them of all ages and both sexes, in the times of the Maccabees, suffering death for their adherence to the law with all that heroism which afterwards so distinguished the Christian martyrs. The laws of *separation* therefore, if I may so call them, were now useless; and as it was an important part of the Messiah's office to break down the middle wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles, and to admit them as one people into the new covenant by which all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, when "the mountain of the Lord's house was to be established on the top of the mountains, and all nations to flow unto it," (c) those laws were of course necessarily abrogated.

As in Israel and Judah the church and state were not, as they have been everywhere

(a) St Matth. v. 17, 18.

(b) Ezek. xx. 25, &c.

(c) Isaiah ii. 2

else, distinct societies, but one society under the immediate government of God, the laws, which are in other nations called *municipal*, were among that people enforced by the sanctions of religion; as, on the other hand, the duties of religion were enjoined by the laws of the state. Some of these laws therefore were applicable only to the state of Judea under a theocratic government, and the punishments decreed against the breach of them were such as no other government could with equity inflict. It has been shewn elsewhere (a), that the children of idolaters might, with perfect equity, be punished under that government for the iniquities of their fathers; but it is obvious, that this could not be done by any government administered by uninspired men. Such punishments therefore were necessarily to be abolished, when all distinction between Jews and Gentiles were to be done away; but so far is this change from furnishing an objection to the Christian dispensation, that it is nothing more than what the Jews were, by their own prophets, taught to expect under the reign of their Messiah. Before the Babylonish captivity, obscure intimations had been given by the prophets, of a future state of existence, in which all the inequalities of the present are to be made straight; the kings of Judah, who were in general very wicked, had ceased to be directed, in their judgments of persons accused of crimes, as were the judges, and earliest monarchs, by the Spirit of God; and the penalty denounced against a breach of the second commandment of the decalogue, was either not inflicted at all, or inflicted in a manner that appeared not to the people consistent with those notions of justice which are engraved on every unsophisticated mind. Hence the Jews seem to have complained of this part of their law; for we find the prophets thus addressing them:—"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, (b) that I will sow the house of Israel, and the house of Judah, with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast.—In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the childrens teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity; every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel," &c. as already quoted, p. 7. In perfect harmony with this, the prophet, Ezekiel says, (c) "What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the children of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the childrens teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul * that sinneth, it shall die.—The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.—Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel, Is not my way equal? Are not your ways unequal?"

Nothing therefore can be more evident than that this part of the judicial law of the Jews was to cease under the reign of the Messiah. It is absurd to say, though I believe it has often been said, that the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel referred in these texts to a future state, for no man ever admitted a future state of retribution, and seriously believed that the child should, in that state, be punished for the iniquities of his father. We often see, in this world, very virtuous children struggling under poverty and disease brought on them by the iniquities of their fathers—not as punishments, but as the effects of the general laws of nature, which could not be suspended in their favour

(a) Volume i. p. 520, note *.

(b) Jerem. xxxi. 27—31.

(c) Ch. xviii. 2, 3, 4, 20, 25.

* The word rendered *soul* in this passage often signifies *life* and *person*; and such is its meaning here: for it is nowhere said in the Old Testament that the souls of children are in the next world to suffer eter-

nal death for the sins of their parents. The meaning of the passage seems to be this; "Behold the *lives* of all are mine; as the *life* of the father, so also the *life* of the son is mine: The *person* that sinneth, he shall die," &c. See Parkhurst's Hebrew Lexicon; and Taylor's Concordance on the word נָפֶשׁ.

without introducing perhaps great confusion into the works of God ; but one of the best arguments which the light of reason can discover for a future state of retribution, is the necessity of such a state to do justice to those virtuous persons, who have suffered so much in the present state for no iniquities of their own. To a future state, therefore, we cannot suppose that these two illustrious prophets refer, when they say—" Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when they shall no more say, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the childrens teeth are set on edge ;" for in no days, since the beginning of the world, hath it been said that this will be the case in a future state. Besides, Jeremiah expressly refers this change in the administration of the law to the days, in which God was to make a *new covenant* with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, different from that, which he made with their fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt ; but no Jew nor Christian ever supposed that any new covenant was to be made with the houses of Israel and Judah until the coming of the Messiah.

The Messiah came, at the precise period in which it was foretold (*a*) that he should come, in the person of JESUS OF NAZARETH ; and of the terms of the NEW COVENANT, as well as of the means by which he established it, we have a full and perspicuous account in the books of the New Testament, which amount to the number of twenty-seven tracts, of which the four first are memoirs of the life and doctrine of the person claiming to himself the character and prerogatives of the Messiah promised to the Jews ; the third is the history of the most eminent of his immediate followers ; twenty-one are letters or epistles written either to particular churches, the governors of particular churches, or to the Christians at large ; and the last is a prophetic description of the progress of the Christian church from its foundation to the end of the world. These tracts have, among Christians, equal authority with that which the books of Moses and the prophets had among the ancient Jews, and are believed to have been dictated, as they were, by the Spirit of God.

That in the reign of *Tiberius*, there lived such a person as JESUS CHRIST, who suffered death under *Pontius Pilate*, the Roman governor of Judea, is what Christians of all countries profess ; what the Jews of all ages since have acknowledged ; and what several heathen authors (*b*) have recorded. That this Jesus had, from the first, a succession of men to publish his doctrines, and to testify to the world the history of his life, and actions, and death ; and that, in a short space of time, four approved historians recorded them in four separate and distinct memoirs—generally called *Gospels*, is related by the earliest writers in the Christian church, and implied in our present possession of those *Gospels* themselves. That the *Gospels* and other books of the New Testament, which have descended to us, are the very same which those historians and other inspired men wrote, the authors of the very next age, and of every age since, have asserted ; both Jews and heathens, in their tracts against Christianity, have allowed ; and the numerous passages cited from them, and in the names of their respective authors, down even to this day, evince. To the authenticity of any ancient writings no human testimony greater than this can be brought or even conceived ; but the claims of our Lord to the character of the Son of God, who came into the world to abrogate the Mosaic covenant, and to introduce among mankind a new and more perfect dispensation of religion, must be supported by more than human testimony. The Mosaic covenant was undoubtedly given to the Israelites by God ; and it could not be superseded by another which had not at least equal evidence of its Divine origin ; but the four *Gospels*, together with the *Acts of the Apostles*, carry within themselves the same evidence of the Divine mission of their authors, which, it hath been shewn elsewhere (*c*), characterize the Pentateuch of Moses, and the book of Joshua.

(*a*) Gen. xlix. 10. Dan. ix. 20, &c.

(*b*) *Suetonius, Tacitus, and the Younger Pliny.*

(*c*) *Introduction to the History of the Old Testament.*

The miracles of Christ were as public as the miracles of Moses, and they were performed among a people who were inveterate enemies to his name. Could he have persuaded five thousand of such enemies at one time, and four thousand at another (*a*), that he had fed them with a few small fishes and barley loaves, if such had not been the case; and that the fragments which remained, on each occasion, over and above to them who had eaten, amounted to a greater quantity than the bread and fishes which were originally set before the multitude? Could he have persuaded a great number of Jews, in defiance of the testimony of their own senses, that, in their presence, he had, at one time (*b*), called out of his grave a man who had been four days dead, and at another (*c*), that he had restored to life a young man, the only son of a widow, merely by pronouncing the words—"Young man, I say unto thee arise"? Could he have persuaded the chief priests and scribes that he had healed in their presence (*d*) multitudes of the blind and lame in the temple, immediately after he had driven out of it them that bought and sold in the temple, and overthrown the tables of the money changers, if he had not really performed these cures? Impossible! In miracles so public and so far transcending all human ingenuity, and such were all the miracles of our Lord, no deception could have been practised on the senses of those who are said to have witnessed them. A forgery therefore of the books in which these miracles are recorded could not be practised in the age in which Christ is said to have appeared on the earth; and had the *Gospels*, with the *Acts of the Apostles*, been forged at any subsequent period, they could not have been received as authentic by any people under heaven.

The authors of these books speak of themselves as having been the companions of Christ;—"that which we have seen and heard," says one of them (*e*), "declare we unto you." They give accounts of vast multitudes of Jews following him from place to place to hear his doctrine and behold his miracles; they speak in the most artless manner of the chief priests and scribes stirring up the people against him, and of his suffering death by an unjust sentence extorted from the Roman governor of Judea. They affirm, with the careless confidence of truth, that he rose from the dead on the third day; and they conceal not the account given by the unbelieving Jews of the removal of his body from the grave in which it had been buried. They represent him as, after his resurrection, commanding his apostles to go into *all the world*, and preach the Gospel to *every creature*, baptizing their converts in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" as promising to be with them "*always*, even unto the end of the world;" but commanding them in the mean time to remain as private persons in the city of Jerusalem till they should be "endued with power from on high." They inform us, that he then led them out as far as Bethany, where, as he was blessing them, "he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven;" that they then returned to Jerusalem in obedience to his command, and "were continually in the temple blessing and praising God;" and that, "when the day of Pentecost was fully come, as they were all with one accord in one place, waiting for the promise of the Father, which they had so lately heard from their glorified Master, suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, which filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them, continues the historian, cloven tongues like as of fire, and it set upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance (*f*)."

In events so public and so signal as this, there was no room for mistake or deception. Of all the miracles recorded in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, there is not one, of which the evidence is so multiplied as that of the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost; for it rests not on the testimony of those, whether many or

(*a*) St Mat. xiv. 21. xv. 38.
(*d*) St Mat. xxi. 12—17.

(*b*) St John xi. 43.
(*e*) St John.

(*c*) St Luke vii. 1—17.
(*f*) St Mark xvi. St Luke xxiv. Acts i. and ii.

few, who were all with one accord in one place. It is testified by all Jerusalem, and by the natives of regions far distant from Jerusalem ; for there were then, says the historian, “ dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven ; and when the inspiration of the disciples was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were all confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these who speak Galileans ? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born ? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.”

It hath been objected by infidelity to the resurrection of Christ, that he ought to have appeared publicly, wherever he had appeared before his crucifixion : but here is a miracle displayed much farther than the resurrection of Christ could have been by his preaching openly and working miracles for forty days in the temple and synagogues of Jerusalem, as he had done formerly ; and this miracle is so connected with the resurrection, that if the apostles speaking a variety of tongues be admitted, the resurrection of Jesus cannot be denied. In reply to those (probably natives of Jerusalem) who, imagining that the apostles uttered *gibberish*, charged them with being full of new wine, St Peter said, “ Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words ; for these men are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day—Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and signs, and wonders, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know. Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.—*This Jesus hath God raised up*, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being *by the right hand of God exalted*, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. (a)”

Thus, by the miraculous effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, were the resurrection and ascension of Christ proved to a variety of nations of Asia, Africa, and Europe—all the quarters of the globe which were then known—as completely as if he had actually appeared among that mixed multitude in Jerusalem, reproved the high priest and council of the Jews for their unbelief and hardness of heart, and then ascended in their presence to heaven. They had such evidence as was incontrovertible, that St Peter and the other apostles were inspired by the Spirit of God ; they could not but know, as every Theist admits, that the Spirit of God never was, nor ever will be, shed abroad to enable any order of men to propagate falshood with success ; one of those, who by this inspiration were speaking correctly a variety of tongues, assured them that Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had slain, was raised from the dead, and exalted to the right hand of God ; and that the same Jesus had, according to his promise, shed abroad on the apostles, that which they both saw and heard. The consequence of all this, we are told, was, that three thousand of his audience were instantly converted to the faith, and the same day incorporated into the church by baptism.

Would any man in his senses have written a narrative of such events as these at the very time when they are said to have happened, and in any one of those countries, to the inhabitants of which he appeals as witnesses of their truth, if he had not been aware that their truth could not be called in question ? Would any forger of such a book as the Acts of the Apostles, at a period *near* to that in which he relates that such astonishing events had happened, have needlessly appealed for the truth of his narrative to the people of all nations, and thus gone out of his way to furnish his readers with in-

numerable means of detecting his imposture? At no period indeed could forged books, such as the four *Gospels* and the *Acts of the Apostles*, have been received as authentic, unless all the events which they record, whether natural or supernatural, had been believed, all the principal doctrines received, and all the rites of religion which they prescribe, practised, from the very period at which they represent the Son of God as sojourning on earth, laying the foundation of his church, dying on a cross, rising from the dead, and ascending into heaven.

If we suppose that the four *Gospels* gave the first account of those things, and yet were not heard of till some generations had passed away from the era which they assign to the events that they record, it is impossible that they could anywhere have been received as authentic writings of the companions or contemporaries of Christ. Could the inhabitants of all Syria, of the principal cities of Greece, and of the overgrown capital of the empire, have, by means of forged books, been persuaded, that great numbers of themselves and their ancestors had, from generation to generation, been baptized in "the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," and accustomed to meet, every first day of the week, to offer up prayers and praises to Christ, and to celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, when Christ, baptism, and the Lord's Supper, had never been heard of till the appearance of those books? Surely the most credulous man on earth would have rejected such an impudent forgery with scorn.

We have seen (a) how impossible it would be to forge such a code as the Mosaic law, and impose it as ancient and authentic on a *single* nation; but, were there degrees of impossibility, it would be still more impossible to forge such books as the *Gospels* and the *Acts of the Apostles*, and impose them upon a *variety* of nations, the most highly polished and enlightened of all antiquity. These books represent, as universally known from the era of the emperor Tiberius, and not barely as known, but as very generally adopted, a religion which was in fact never heard of till their appearance; and, on the supposition of forgery, not one *individual* or one *nation* only, but the inhabitants of *Rome, Athens, Corinth, Antioch, Damascus*, the very seats of science; and *all Judea*, of which the inhabitants possessed a revelation of their own, and were extremely averse to any other, received this fiction as true, in opposition to the evidence of their own senses!

As this is utterly impossible, the four *Gospels*, together with the *Acts of the Apostles*, must be authentic, and the facts recorded in them, whether natural or supernatural, must have happened just as the authors of these books relate that they happened; but if the facts be admitted, the doctrines must likewise be admitted not barely as true, but as a revelation from heaven, for as such they were preached by their authors; and no man ever has been, or ever will be, enabled by the God of truth to work a real miracle in support of falshood.

This argument cannot perhaps be employed to prove the authenticity of all the epistles which make so great a part of the New Testament; but it is certainly as applicable to some of them, as it is to the *Gospels*, and the book called the *Acts of the Apostles*.

The apostles, as Michaelis justly observes (b), frequently allude, in their epistles, to the gift of miracles, which they had communicated to the Christian converts by the imposition of hands, in confirmation of the doctrine delivered in their speeches and writings, and sometimes to miracles, which they themselves had performed." Now if these epistles are really genuine, the miracles referred to must certainly have been wrought, and the doctrines preached must have been Divine; for no man in his senses would have written to large communities, that he had not only performed miracles in their presence, in confirmation of the Divine origin of certain doctrines, but that he

(a) Introduction to the History of the Old Testament.
ment, chap. ii, sect. 1.

(b) Introduction to the New Testa-

had likewise communicated to them the same extraordinary endowments. Or if we can suppose any human being to have possessed sufficient affrontery to write in this manner to any community, it is obvious that, so far from gaining credit to his doctrine by such assertions, if not known to be true, he would have exposed himself to the utmost ridicule and contempt, and have ruined the cause which he attempted to support by such absurd conduct.

“St Paul’s first epistle to the Thessalonians is addressed to a Christian church, which he had lately founded, and to which he had preached the Gospel only three Sabbath days (a). A sudden persecution obliged him to quit this community, before he had given to it its proper degree of consistence; and, what is of consequence in the present instance, he was protected neither by the power of the magistrate nor the favour of the vulgar. A pretended wonder-worker, who has once drawn the populace to his party, may easily perform his exploits, and safely proclaim them. But this very populace, at the instigation of the Jews, had excited the insurrection, which obliged St Paul to quit the town (b). He sends therefore to the Thessalonians, who had received the Gospel, but whose faith he apprehended might waver through persecution, authorities and proofs of his Divine mission; of which authorities, the first and chief are *miracles* and the *gifts of the Holy Ghost* (c). Is it possible, now, that St Paul, without forfeiting all pretensions to common sense, could, when writing to a church which he had lately established, have spoken of miracles performed, and gifts of the Holy Ghost communicated, if no member of that church had seen the one nor received the other,” (d)—nay, if many members had not witnessed both the performance of the miracles, and the effusions of the Holy Ghost? But it is equally impossible that the epistle, making this appeal to miracles and spiritual gifts, could have been received as authentic, if forged in the name of St Paul at any future period, during the existence of a Christian church at Thessalonica. In the two first chapters it represents its author and two of his companions as having been lately in that city, and appeals to the church for the manner in which they had conducted themselves while there, and for the zeal and success with which they had preached the Gospel; and it concludes with these awful words,—“I adjure you—*καὶ ὑμᾶς*—by the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren;” i. e. all the Christians of the community (e). Had St Paul, and Timotheus, and Silvanus, never been in Thessalonica, or had they conducted themselves in any respect differently from what they are said to have done in the two first chapters, these chapters would have convicted the author of this epistle of forgery, at whatever time it had made its first appearance. Had they been actually there, and preached and wrought miracles just as they are said to have done; and had some impostor, knowing this, forged the epistle before us at a considerable distance of time, the adjuration at the end of it must instantly have detected the forgery. Every Thessalonian Christian, of common sense, would have said, “How came we never to hear of this epistle before? Its author represents himself and two of his friends as having converted us to the faith a very short time before it was written and sent to us; and he charges those to whom it was immediately sent, in the most solemn manner possible, that they should cause it to be read to every one of us; no Christian in Thessalonica would in a matter of this kind, have dared to disobey the authority of an apostle, especially when enforced by so awful an adjuration; and yet neither we, nor our fathers, ever heard of this epistle, till now that Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus

(a) Acts. xvii. 2. (b) Ib. 5—10. (c) 1 Thess. i. 5—10. See Hardy’s Greek Testament, *Whitby* on the place, with *Schlusner* and *Parkhurst’s* Lexicons on the word *divinus*.
 (d) *Morsh’s* translation of Michaelis’s Introduction, &c. chap. ii. sect. 1. (e) See the Supplementary Dissertation, &c. p. 360 of this Volume.

are all dead, and therefore incapable of either confirming or refuting its authenticity!" Such an epistle, if not genuine, could never have been received by any community.

"In the same manner, St Paul attempting to convince the Galatians, who had departed from the purity of the Gospel, that it was necessary to abolish the Mosaic law, proposes the following questions (a)—*Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?—He that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?* (b) That St Paul had preached the Gospel to the Galatians, and delivered to them the apostolical decrees respecting the things necessary to be laid on the Gentile converts, before he wrote his epistle to them, is evident both from the epistle itself, and from the account of his travels in the *Acts of the Apostles*. He seems likewise to have been the chief instrument employed in their conversion; and therefore there can be no doubt but that it is of himself he says—"He that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" "But would an impostor, endowed with that degree of judgment which was requisite to the writing of this epistle, have appealed against the avowed enemies of the new religion, not only to miracles performed by himself, but to supernatural endowments imparted to the very persons to whom he wrote, if they could have replied—We are ignorant of these endowments, we understand not even what is meant by gifts of the Holy Ghost?" Whilst St Paul was alive, no impostor could have acted in this manner; nor would such an epistle as this, if forged within a few years of his death (and we shall see by and bye, that none of the epistles written in his name could have been forged at a late period), have been received as authentic by any community, unless indeed all those gifts of the Spirit, appealed to by the forger, had been really bestowed on their fathers by the true St Paul. Every Galatian would have said, "We never heard our fathers say, that St Paul had bestowed such endowments on them or their fathers; we never heard them even speak of this epistle, which is now attempted to be imposed on us as having been addressed to them; and as it treats of matters of the highest importance to the purity of the faith, appealing to miracles wrought among them in support of its doctrine, it is impossible that they *would* or indeed *could*, have concealed it until now. Surely some of our fathers would have mentioned to us their children a tract supported by such authority, and so important to unable us, as well as themselves, to "stand fast in the liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free." (c)

The same apostle, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, (d) corrects the abuse of certain spiritual gifts, particularly that of speaking divers kinds of tongues, and prescribes rules for the employment of these supernatural talents; he enters into a particular detail of them, as they existed in the Corinthian church, reasons on their respective worth and excellence; says that they were limited in duration, that they were no distinguishing mark of Divine favour, nor of so great importance as faith and virtue, the love of God, and charity to our neighbours. Now if this epistle was really written by St Paul to the Corinthians, and they had actually received no spiritual gifts, no power, imparted by extraordinary means, of speaking foreign languages, the proper place to be assigned him were not among impostors, but among those who had lost their understanding. A juggler may deceive by the dexterity of his hands, and persuade the ignorant and the credulous, that more than human means are requisite for the performance of his extraordinary feats; but he will hardly persuade those, whose understandings remain unimpaired, that he has likewise communicated to his spectators the power of working miracles, and of speaking languages which they had never learned, were they conscious of their inability to perform the one, or to speak the other." (e) If the

(a) Gal. iii. 2, 5.

(b) *Michaelis* Ibid.

(c) Gal. v. 1.

(d) Chap. xii. xiii. xix

(e) *Michaelis* Ibid.

epistle therefore was written during the life of St Paul, and received by the Corinthian church, it is impossible to doubt but that St Paul was its author, and that among the Corinthians were prevalent those spiritual gifts of which he labours to correct the abuse. If those gifts were never prevalent among the Corinthian Christians, and this epistle was not seen by them until the next age, it could not have been received by the Corinthian church as the genuine writing of the apostle; because the members of that church must have been aware, that if those gifts, of which it speaks, had been really possessed, and so generally displayed by their fathers, as it represents them to have been, some of themselves would surely have heard their fathers mention them; and as the epistle treats of some of the most important subjects that ever occupied the mind of man,—the introduction of death into the world through Adam, and the resurrection of the dead through Christ, they must have inferred that their fathers would not have secreted from them their children a treatise on topics so interesting to the whole human race.

Perhaps there is not one of St Paul's epistles which does not contain within itself references to some notorious fact, that prove with the force of demonstration, that the epistle is the genuine writing of the apostle, whose name it bears. There certainly is not one of them received into the canon of the New Testament, that contains not several incidents, which, when compared with the history of St Paul in the book called the Acts of the Apostles, furnish a complete proof of the genuineness of the epistle, and the authenticity of the history. This has been shewn by Dr Paley with a clearness and force of reasoning, to which I have not heard that infidelity has yet attempted to make a reply. To his ingenious and unrivalled work *, therefore, I refer the reader who wishes for further satisfaction, on a most important subject, than could be given to him in the compass of this Introduction even by Paley's ingenuity; and beg leave to observe, that the authenticity of no ancient book whatever has been so completely established by external evidence, as the authenticity of the tracts which compose the volume of the New Testament.

“Some of them, to use the words of the excellent author to whom I have just referred, are quoted or alluded to by every Christian writer that followed the apostles and evangelists—by Clement of Rome, by Hermas, by Ignatius, by Polycarp, disciples or contemporaries of the apostles; by Justin Martyr, by the churches of Gaul, by Irenæus, by Athenagoras, by Theophilus, by Clement of Alexandria, by Hermias, by Tertullian, who occupied the succeeding age;” by Origen, by Cyprian, with his numerous correspondents, by Hippolytus, and by Victorinus of Petaw, who all flourished in the third century. And it is worthy of observation, that in the 76th (al. 85th.) of the canons called apostolical, which, though neither dictated by the apostles, nor written by Clement of Rome, are unquestionably very ancient †, the canonical books of the New Testament are thus enumerated.

* Entitled *Horæ Paulinæ: or, the Truth of the Scripture History of St Paul, evinced by a comparison of the Epistles which bear his name, with the Acts of the Apostles, and with one another.* I am not aware that, in the whole range of English literature, there is a single work in defence of the authenticity of any part of the Holy Scriptures, unless perhaps *Leslie's Short Method with the Deists* must be excepted, that, in the compass of a small volume, will give such perfect satisfaction to the ingenuous and attentive reader, as the *Horæ Paulinæ*.

† It is in the highest degree probable that they were composed by several synods held in the decline

of the second and beginning of the third century. They are certainly referred to by *Athanasius* and *Basil the Great*, as ancient ecclesiastical canons, and are mentioned as such in several synods held in the fourth century, particularly in the famous council of Nice, and in that of Antioch. They are differently numbered by different editors; that which is by *Cotelierius* and *Mr Johnson* reckoned the seventy-sixth, being in other editions numbered the eighty-fifth. I do not quote them as entitled to any other deference than what is due to so public a testimony to a matter of fact.

The four Gospels of

MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, and JOHN;

Fourteen Epistles of PAUL; two of PETER;

Three of JOHN; one of JAMES; one of JUDE; and

Two Epistles of CLEMENT; together with

The ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

The council of Laodicea, which was held in the year 367, enumerates the canonical books of the New Testament thus: *Four Gospels*; *Acts of the Apostles*; seven *Catholic Epistles*; and fourteen of *St Paul*, which are recited in the order in which they stand in our English Bibles.

The mere English reader will be surprised to find two epistles by *Clement* of Rome enumerated among the canonical books of the New Testament in the apostolical canon, and the *Apocalypse* omitted both in that canon and by the council of Laodicea. The fact with respect to the epistles of *Clement* seems to have been simply this; that they were held in very high estimation, especially the first, by the church of Corinth, to which it was addressed; that they were transmitted by that church to others; that the first was universally so much esteemed, as to be publicly read in the assemblies of the faithful, just as we still read the books called *the Wisdom of Solomon* and *Ecclesiasticus*; and that both epistles, from this circumstance, came to be written in the same volume with the inspired writings, as the Apocryphal books of the Old Testament are still bound up in the same volume with the canonical books even in Protestant churches. The two epistles of *Clement*, if the fragment which remains of the second can be called an epistle, are of very unequal value; but they are both extant in the Alexandrian manuscript of the Bible in the British Museum, though it by no means follows, that either the transcriber of that manuscript, or even the author of the apostolical canon, held either of them of equal authority with the writings undoubtedly inspired.

The omission of the *Apocalypse* in both these canons is easily accounted for. The canon called apostolical begins thus *—"Let the following books be esteemed venerable and holy by you all, both of the clergy and laity: Of the Old Testament, &c." From these words it appears that the authors of this canon intended to enumerate such books as might be *generally* read with advantage as well by the laity as by the clergy; and hence we find them, about the middle of the canon, recommending—not as of equal authority with the Sacred books of the Old Testament which they had just enumerated, but as something besides them (ἐξωθεν δὲ)—*The Wisdom of the learned Sirach* to be studied by youth—undoubtedly as moral lessons. Hence too at the end of the canon they enjoin the bishops to study the book called the *Apostolical Constitutions* †; but not to publish it to *all*, on account of the *mysteries* (μυστηρία) which it contains. For the same

* "Εστω δὲ ὑμῖν πᾶσι κληρικοῖς καὶ λαϊκοῖς βιβλία σέβασμα καὶ ἁγία· τῆς μὲν παλαιᾶς διαθήκης, &c.

† Bishop Beveridge seems to have proved completely, that this book existed at a very early period; that it was probably compiled by *Clement* of Alexandria, who flourished A. D. 192; and that it appears by the quotations made from it by ancient authors to have been then much more valuable than it is now. Still it is useful for stating, not as it professes to do, the *Catholic doctrine*, but many public facts about the truth of which catholics and heretics were equally agreed. It is well known, that Whiston

attempted to prove it the genuine work of the whole college of apostles; and therefore as not only entitled to a place in the sacred canon, but as the most important book of the whole Christian Scriptures. He was probably led to this extravagant dream by the countenance which the *Apostolical Constitutions*, in their present state, give to the Arian doctrine; but his arguments in support of his opinion are so very weak, that I believe it was, with reference to them, that Warburton (Introduction to Julian) said—"It is now no secret, that the oldest mathematician in England is the worst reasoner in it."

reason the *Apocalypse* may have been omitted in this catalogue of books which all were to esteem holy, and, of course, to read; for it is so little adapted to the edification of the illiterate, and such absurdities have been drawn from it by fanciful interpreters, that very few lessons from it are at this day appointed to be read in the church of England, in which, however, it is certainly deemed a book of canonical authority.

It is omitted likewise, as the reader will observe, in the Laodicean canon, which is more accurately expressed than that called apostolical; for that canon makes no mention whatever of the *Wisdom of Sirach* in the Old Testament, or of the *Epistles of Clement* and the *Apostolical Constitutions* in the New. It does not, however, follow from this, that the council of Laodicea did not consider the *Apocalypse* as a sacred book, or was at all inclined to put it on the same footing with the *Constitutions*, and the *epistles of Clement*. It is quoted as sacred by *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, and *Theophilus of Alexandria*, all of whom flourished about the middle or at least before the end of the second century; and *Melito* (a), towards the end of that century, wrote a commentary on it; but in the third century, *Caius* or *Gaius* (b), a Roman presbyter, and *Dionysius*, bishop of Alexandria, in their zeal against the doctrine of the *Millennium*, which had then begun to put on a very exceptionable form, called in question the authority of this book. *Dionysius*, indeed, did not absolutely reject it. He admitted it to be an inspired work, written by some man of the name of *John*, but not by *John the apostle*; and he drew this inference from its style, so different, as he thought, from the style of the *Gospel* and *Epistle* which all acknowledged to have been written by the apostle. It will be seen elsewhere (c), how little confidence can be placed in arguments drawn from the style of books written on subjects so very different from each other, as are the subjects of *St John's Gospel* and *Apocalypse*; but it may be proper here to place the authority of *Origen* and *Hippolytus* (d) in opposition to that of *Caius* and *Dionysius*. *Origen* had been the preceptor of *Dionysius*, and was beyond all controversy the most learned and acute writer of the age in which he lived; he opposed the doctrine of the *Millennium* with as great vehemence as his pupil; but he opposed it, not by calling in question the authenticity of the book, in which that doctrine was thought to be taught, but by contending that the *Millenarians* mistook the meaning of the *Apocalypse*. That the council of Laodicea should not recommend to the perusal of every man a work so liable to be misinterpreted, and from which had been extracted so exceptionable a doctrine as that of the *Millennium*, in the form in which it was then exhibited, can excite no surprise; for their silence respecting the *Apocalypse* implies no doubt whatever of its being the genuine work of *St John*, but only of its being proper for the perusal of the illiterate vulgar. It is indeed to be wished even now, that no man would undertake to interpret this most mysterious book, who is not thoroughly acquainted with the history of the world since the commencement of the Christian era, and who has not learned, that "no historical series of prophecy can be thoroughly understood, before its full accomplishment, when it will be explained by the event."

But the *Apocalypse* is not the only book of the New Testament, about the canonical authority of which some doubts were entertained in the primitive church. It appears from *Eusebius* (e), that the epistles ascribed to *James* and *Jude*, were, for some time, called in question, as well as the second ascribed to *St Peter*; and that, though the second and third of the epistles ascribed to *St John*, were undoubtedly of the apostolic age, the learned of his time were divided in their opinions whether they were written by *St John the apostle and evangelist*, or by another person of the same name. It is likewise universally known, that, though the *epistle to the Hebrews* is unquestionably of

(a) *Cave's Hist. Liter.* and *Dr Routh's Reliquiæ Sacræ*, vol. i.

and *Dr Routh's Reliquiæ Sacræ*, vol. ii.

account of *Hippolytus*, see *Cave's Hist. Liter.*

(b) See *Cave's Hist. Liter.*

(c) Page 471 of this volume.

(d) For some

(e) *Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. cap. xxv.*

the age of the apostles, and has always been received as canonical Scripture, doubts were long entertained, and are by some entertained still, whether St Paul was the author of that epistle.

That the epistle of St James is authentic, and ought to be received as canonical Scripture, Dr Lardner has declared his firm conviction (*a*). It is alluded to by Clement, bishop of Rome, and by Hermas, who both lived in the age of the apostles. It is quoted once or twice by Origen, but as of doubtful authority, or not received by all; and we have seen, that it is placed in the sacred canon by the council of Laodicea, as well as by the authors of the 76th of the canons called apostolical. Michaelis has declared himself of a different opinion from Lardner, and affects to hold the proofs brought forward by that diligent searcher into antiquity very cheap; though few, that are acquainted with the accuracy of both writers, are likely to repose the same confidence in the quotations made by the German professor as in those of the author of the *Credibility of the Gospel History*. Michaelis has indeed made one observation, which ought to have silenced all his own cavils against the authenticity of this epistle, and supplied the defects which he found in the evidence brought forward by Lardner.

“Though Eusebius, says he (*b*), places the epistle of St James in the same class with that of St Jude, the second of St Peter, and the second and third of St John, it has in some respects a better claim to canonical authority than these. For none of these four last mentioned epistles were admitted into the Syriac canon; but the epistle of St James was admitted into it, and the Syriac version of this epistle appears to have been made by the same person who translated the other epistles. We must conclude therefore, that, when the Syriac version was made, which was at the close of the first century, the translator found this epistle in the Greek collection of canonical writings, and that the Syrian church received it as canonical, with the first epistle of St Peter and the first of St John.”

In a question concerning a matter of fact respecting the canon of the Christian Scriptures, surely the testimony of the *Syrian church* at the close of the first century is the very highest authority that can be had, or, indeed I think, conceived; and, by quotations from Syrian authors, the professor shews that the testimony of that church in favour of the epistle under consideration continued to the thirteenth century. The weight of this testimony seems to have made some impression on the mind of *Michaelis*; for he says that his principal objection to the canonical authority of the epistle arises from the uncertainty whether or not its author was one of our Lord's apostles; just as if the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost had been bestowed, in that age, on none but the apostles! But this objection, frivolous as it is, Lardner ought to have removed; for both he and Cave have proved, as completely as any point of the kind can be proved, that James, called the Lord's brother—the author of the epistle—was an apostle in the highest sense of the word.

Among the epistles, which, Eusebius says, were in his days of doubtful authority, there is none to which so many internal objections present themselves to the mind of the reader, as the epistle of St Jude. But the external evidence of the genuineness of that epistle, and by consequence of its canonical authority, is very strong. It was received, we have seen, as Sacred Scripture by the council of Laodicea, and by the authors of the more ancient canons called apostolical; it was received likewise with the other catholic epistles, by the third council of Carthage (*c*), held A. D. 252. It was received and commented on by Clement of Alexandria, who flourished about A. D. 194; and it is expressly quoted by the same author in two of his works still extant—the *Pedagogue*, and the *Stromata*. It is likewise quoted by *Tertullian*, about the year

(*a*) Supplement to the *Credibility*, &c. chap. xvi.
chap. xxvi. sect. viii.

(*b*) Introduction to the New Testament,
(*c*) *Lardner's Supplement*, &c. chap. xxi.

200, in these words—"Hence it is that Enoch is quoted by the apostle Jude" (a)—which prove with the force of demonstration that the epistle of Jude in our Scriptures is the work referred to by that ancient writer. Origen, about the year 230, quotes it very frequently. It is acknowledged as genuine by *Athanasius*, *Cyril of Jerusalem*, *Epiphanius*, *Didymus of Alexandria*, *Jerome*, *Ruffinus*, and *Augustine*, who all flourished in the fourth century, and were—some of them, especially *Jerome*—as capable of forming a correct judgment on the subject as any critic of the present day.

To all this weight of testimony *Michaelis* and others, who wish to reject the epistle under consideration from the canon of Scripture, have nothing to reply but that the author quotes apocryphal books, and that there is no certainty of his having been an apostle. With respect to his quoting apocryphal books, it is sufficient to observe, that if he found in those books a good illustration of the doctrine which he was inculcating, he might employ them for that purpose in an epistle addressed to Jews, with as much propriety as St Paul quoted heathen poets in discourses addressed to Greeks. Even our Lord himself illustrated his doctrine by parables, and gave to the actors in them real names familiar to the Jews; and it may be proper to add, that *Michaelis* admits, that if Jude, the author of the epistle, can be proved to have been an apostle, this objection and all others of the kind must go for nothing. Now he acknowledges, what indeed he could not well deny, that Jude, the author of the epistle—if the epistle be genuine—was certainly the brother of James, called our Lord's brother; but, as has been just observed, the apostleship of James our Lord's brother has been completely proved by *Cave* and *Lardner* (b).

If the observations of *Michaelis* (c) on the epistle of St Jude gives little satisfaction, his reasoning in support of the authenticity of the second and third epistles of St John is to me so very conclusive, that I shall state it at full length in the words of his learned translator.

"Though not admitted into the Syriac version of the New Testament, these two epistles are so similar to the first, both in the thoughts and in the style, that in my opinion they were certainly written by the same person who wrote the first, that is, by St John the apostle. Nor is it easy to comprehend what could have induced an impostor to forge two such epistles, or what advantage he could have proposed by the introduction of them. For they contain nothing which had not been said in the first epistle, except commendation or censure either of unnamed persons, as of *Demetrius* and *Diotrephes*, of whom no one knows what they were. They could not have been forged during St John's life, for the imposture must have been immediately detected; and if they had been forged after his death, it is not very probable that the impostor would have made the pretended author promise at the end of each epistle, that he would shortly pay a visit to those to whom the epistles are addressed.

"In modern times, an objection has been made to the opinion, that St John the apostle was the author, drawn from a comparison of St John's amiable character with an apparently severe precept delivered in the second epistle, ver. 10, 11. Here the author says,—“if there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither greet him; for he that greeteth him * is partaker of his evil deeds.” Now it is asserted that St John the apostle, whose precepts are replete with love and charity, would hardly have given the uncharitable command to refuse the rites of hospitality to all those who differ from us in religious opinions; and that this command in

(a) *Eo accidit, quod Enoch apud Judam apostolum testimonium perhibet. De cultu Fem. lib. i. cap. 3.*

(b) *Cave's Life of St James, and Lardner's Supplement, &c. chap. xvi.*

(c) *Marsh's Michaelis, chap. xxxii. sect. 1.*

* In our version it is “neither bid him *God speed*; for he that biddeth him *God speed*,” &c; and this is a better translation than that of *Michaelis*, for it shews more clearly, how the hospitality, which is here forbidden, would be a partaking of evil deeds.

particular would have come with great impropriety from St John, since no man more sensibly felt the violation of these rites than himself (*a*). Hence it is inferred that he was not the author of, at least, the second epistle.

"If the passage just quoted be detached from the rest of the epistle, and the doctrine, which it contains, be taken in its utmost latitude, I own that the argument is very specious. However, it may be explained in such a manner as to remove all difficulty. The Greek expression *χαίρειν αὐτῷ* used in the original, does not denote an ordinary salutation, such as we make to indifferent persons when we meet them in the street, but involves in it a kind of blessing, like the expression—*Peace be with you*. And it is evident from the context, that the subject here relates to the blessing usually received, on entering the house of a friend, or an assurance of hearty welcome*. For that which is meant by the words *λαμβάνειν αὐτὸν εἰς οἰκίαν, καὶ χαίρειν αὐτῷ*, ver. 10. is comprised in the single phrase *χαίρειν αὐτῷ* in the eleventh verse. Now it must be observed, that among the primitive Christians, it was the custom to receive all travelling brethren, and to entertain them during their stay, which was sometimes done at the expence of the whole community by persons appointed for that purpose. That the third epistle relates to the reception and entertainment of travelling Christians, especially of those who travelled to preach the Gospel, is evident from ver. 5—11. But the second epistle is so similar to the third, that we may conclude the same of that also, in the passage which is the subject of our present inquiry. Suppose then that a travelling Christian was known to deliver false doctrines, or to propagate Gnostic errors, such as this, that Jesus was not the Son of God, the question is, Was he entitled to the hospitable reception usually given to Christian travellers? and was it want of charity to refuse him admittance, unless his situation were such as rendered him an object of compassion? I think not; for if a missionary comes into my house, who is a false teacher of Christianity, and I receive and protect him, I take part in the propagation of his errors†"

We have observed that the second epistle of St Peter is one of those, which, in the earliest ages of the church, was considered as of doubtful authority. Origen was the first writer who mentioned this doubt; but we have seen that it was received by the council of Laodicea, and by the collector or collectors of the canons called apostolical; for without it we cannot make up the number of catholic epistles, which, according to the 76th of those canons, were by the church considered as inspired Scriptures. The second epistle was received equally with the first by *Athanasius*, *Cyril of Jerusalem*, *Epiphanius*, *Jerome*, *Ruffinus*, *Augustine*, and others of the fourth century; and it appears from St *Jerome*, that the only reason for calling its authority in question was, a supposed difference of its style from that of the first, which has from the beginning been universally received as the genuine writing of Peter the apostle. This objection was long ago completely removed by Dr *Sherlock* (*b*), afterwards bishop of London; and it has been well observed by Dr *Lardner* (*c*), that the second epistle bears, in the inscription, the name of the same apostle with the first; and that the writer appears (*d*) to have been one of the disciples who were with Jesus in the mount at his transfiguration, which leads us directly to St Peter the apostle. No man, however, has discussed this question

(*a*) See Luke ix. 52—54.

* Schleusner on the word *χαίρω* says it means that kind of exultation, which the people of Jerusalem displayed (1 Kings i. 40.) on the anointing of Solomon; and he explains the words—*ὁ γὰρ λέγων αὐτῷ χαίρειν* (in the passage under consideration)—*qui enim eum salutabat, h. e. qui comiter cum eo agit*.

† It was probably from this very necessary caution of St John, that no Christian, in the primitive church, could travel without taking letters of credence with him from his own bishop, if he meant to communicate

with the Christian church in a foreign country. Whoever brought not with them such letters, were denied communion until they should receive them; though they were allowed to partake of the charity of the church, if they were in necessity. See *Bingham's* *Origines*, &c. book ii. chap. iv. sect. v. and book xvii. chap. iii. sect. vii.

(*b*) Dissert. i. subjoined to his *Sermons on Prophecy*.

(*c*) Supplement &c. chap. xix.

(*d*) 2 Peter, i. 16, 17, 18.

with greater ability, or in fewer words, than Michaelis, of whom it has been justly said by Dr Hales, that we are often compelled to praise and censure him almost with the same breath.

“ After a diligent comparison of the first epistle of St Peter with that which is ascribed to him as his second, the agreement between them, says this ingenious critic (*a*), appears to me to be such, that if the second was not written by St Peter as well as the first, the person who forged it not only possessed the power of imitation in a very unusual degree, but understood likewise the design of the first epistle, with which the ancients in general appear not to have been acquainted. Now, if this be true, the supposition that the second epistle was not written by St Peter himself involves a contradiction. Nor is it credible that a pious impostor of the first or second century should have imitated St Peter so successfully as to betray no marks of a forgery; for the spurious productions said to be of those ages, and sent into the world under the names of apostles, are for the most part very unhappy imitations, and discover evident marks that they were not written by the persons to whom they are ascribed. They betray their origin by the poverty of their materials, or by the circumstance, that instead of containing original thoughts, they are nothing more than a rhapsody of sentiments collected from various parts of the Bible, and put together without plan or order (*b*). This charge cannot possibly be laid to the second epistle of St Peter, which is so far from containing materials derived only from other parts of the Bible, that the third chapter exhibits the discussion of a totally new subject. Lastly, it is extremely difficult even for a man of the greatest talents (and a forger cannot be supposed to have had *supernatural* aid) to forge a writing in the name of another, without sometimes inserting what the pretended author would not, or could not have said; and to support the imposture in so complete a manner, as to militate, in not a single instance, either against his character; or against the age in which he lived. Now in the second epistle of St Peter, though it has been a subject of examination for full seventeen hundred years, nothing has hitherto been discovered, which is unsuitable, either to the apostle, or to the apostolic age. We have no reason therefore to believe, that the second epistle of St Peter is spurious, especially as it is difficult to comprehend what motive could have induced a Christian, whether orthodox or heretic, to attempt the fabrication of such an epistle, and then falsely to ascribe it to St Peter.

“ The arguments in favour of the genuineness of this epistle are of two kinds, being founded on the similarity of the two epistles in respect both to their materials and to their style.

“ The design of the first epistle was to assure the uncircumcised Christians, that they stood in the grace of God, as well as those who had been previously Jews. But the design of the second epistle was certainly the same with that of the first, as appears from the address (chap. i. 1.) *τοῖς ἐσώτισιν ἡμῶν λαχοῦσι πίστιν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ*. If we explain *ἡμῶν* as denoting *us apostles*, the address will imply what was wholly unnecessary, since no one could doubt that the faith of other Christians might be as good as the faith of the apostles, whilst the expression understood in this sense would betray arrogance in the writer. But if we explain *ἡμῶν* as denoting *us who were born Jews*, and consider that the second epistle, as well as the first, was directed to persons who were born heathens, the address becomes clear and consistent. *Δικαιοσύνη τοῦ Θεοῦ* will then signify *the impartiality of God* in estimating the faith of native heathens as highly as the faith of native Jews, which St Peter has extolled in other places (*c*). We shall likewise be able to explain chap. i. 5—10, which appears to contain the tautology, that ‘they who are diligent in good works are not idle;’ whereas, if this epistle be explained from the design

(*a*) Introduction, &c. Ch. xxviii. sect. 1.
furnish a very sufficient proof;

(*b*) Of the truth of this remark the *Apostolical Constitutions*
(*c*) Acts x. 34, 35. xv. 8, 9. 1 Peter i. 17.

(*d*) Ch. 15, 16.

of the first, we shall perceive the meaning of the passage to be this;—that they who are diligent in good works, need not fear the reproach that they observe not the Levitical law, since their good works, which are the fruits of their faith and religious knowledge, will make their calling and election sure!

The deluge, which is not a common subject in apostolic epistles, is mentioned both in 1 Peter iii. 20. and in 2 Peter ii. 5.; and in both places the circumstance is noted that eight persons only were saved, though in neither place does the subject require that the number should be particularly specified. Now it is true that St Peter was not the only apostle, who knew how many persons were saved in the ark; but surely none can suppose that any other APOSTLE would forge an epistle in the name of St Peter, and yet no man but he, who by habit had acquired a familiarity with the subject, would ascertain the precise number, where his argument did not require it. It is evident from a comparison of 1 Peter ii. 13, 14. with Romans xiii. 1—5. either that St Peter had read St Paul's epistle to the Romans, or that St Paul had read the first epistle of St Peter; but the author of the second epistle speaks, in express terms, (a) of the epistles of St Paul. Now no other writer of the New Testament has quoted from any part of the New Testament; consequently we have in these epistles a criterion, from which we may judge that they were written by the same person."

Michaelis agrees with Bishop Sherlock, that there is some difference between the style of the second epistle and that of the first; but he does not think the difference greater than what is often found in the style of the same man writing at different periods of his own life, whilst he contends that there is such a similarity in the use of words, in an uncommon sense, in both epistles, as affords a convincing proof that both must have been written by the same man. It has been objected to the second epistle, that the same word ἀρετή is used (chap. i. 3, and 5.) in two different senses, and that its common meaning "virtue" is applicable to neither of them. "But this very word," says the professor, is used likewise in the first epistle in a peculiar sense, though few commentators have observed it; and consequently the obscurity which attends ἀρετή, 2 Peter i. 3. is rather an argument that both epistles were written by the same person. In 2 Peter i. 3. this favourite word of the apostle's signifies *glory*, and so it does in 1 Peter ii. 9.; but in the fifth verse of the second chapter it denotes *courage*, especially that kind of courage which must attend the faith of a true Christian, but which, at the same time, must be accompanied with knowledge, that they who possess it may not become undaunted martyrs of error and prejudice. The sentences in the second epistle are seldom fluent or well-rounded, but have the same extension as those of the first; and words which occur most frequently in the first epistle, are sure to be found in the second, as ἀναστροφὴ, for instance, which is found six or seven times in the first epistle, occurs at least twice within the narrower compass of the second." For these reasons Michaelis is decidedly of opinion that the second epistle ascribed to St Peter is undoubtedly his, and ought therefore to be universally received as a part of the canonical Scripture:

Of all the epistles which have been thought of doubtful authority, not one has occasioned so much controversy among divines and ecclesiastical historians as the epistle to the Hebrews. Is it an epistle? Is it quoted by St Peter? If it be an epistle, to what community was it sent? What was the situation of that community? At what time was it written? In what language was it written? If it was written in Hebrew, by whom was it translated into Greek? What is the character of its Greek style? Who was the author of this epistle? Is it canonical? And what are its contents?—Are so many questions which have been agitated among critics and commentators, and of which some are of little importance, and others such as cannot now be answered.

(a) Chap. iii. 15, 16. *οἱ ἀποστόλοι καὶ οἱ ἀγγελοὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας*

That it is an epistle, and was sent to the Hebrew Christians of Jerusalem and Palestine in general, a few years before the breaking out of the Jewish war, has been completely proved by Michaelis, and is indeed evident to every one who reads the epistle with attention, and is at all acquainted with the history of those times. Whether it is particularly quoted by St Peter, Michaelis is doubtful, and so am I; but the arguments by which he endeavours to prove that it was written in Hebrew appear to me very far from being conclusive; and it is difficult to forbear from smiling at the attempt to point out instances, in which the translator has mistaken the sense of an original, which the critic, making that attempt, never saw, and which, by his own confession, has been lost for at least 1600 years! My own opinion is, that it is no translation; for there is just as little force in the argument, that it was natural for the author to write to the natives of Palestine in what was then called Hebrew, as there would be in the argument that it was natural for St Paul to write to the natives of Rome in Latin.

On the question, whether St Paul was or was not the author of the epistle, Michaelis represents the fathers of the church as pretty equally divided in opinion; but whoever shall take the trouble to look into Lardner's account of this epistle, will perceive that the representation is very unfair, and that at least three to one of the luminaries of the ancient church were decidedly of opinion that St Paul was the author. To state even the *names* of the numerous witnesses, who in the four first centuries attributed this epistle to St Paul, would swell the bulk of a prefatory discourse beyond all proportion; and Lardner's works, which are remarkable for the fidelity of their quotations, may be easily found by any man who wishes for complete information on the subject. That the epistle contains many sentiments, and even many phrases, which might have naturally flowed from the pen of St Paul, Michaelis admits; but it is not *impossible*, he says, that these might have flowed from some other pen! He passes over, without notice, the very important circumstance, that the epistle appears (*a*) to have been written in Italy; but the mention of Timothy's being set at liberty, and the proposal to visit with him the community to which the epistle was addressed, he admits to be *more likely* to have been made by St Paul than by any other person whatever; but still they *might* have been made by some other person!

From such perverse reasonings as these, the critic who writes so rationally on the second epistle of St Peter, and the second and third of St John, concludes the *probability* to be that St Paul was *not* the author of the epistle to the Hebrews! The reader, who wishes to see the question fairly stated, and fairly and fully argued, will do well to peruse the fourteenth section of the twelfth chapter of Lardner's Supplement, together with the works which are there quoted. In the meantime, if, without giving himself that trouble, he will duly consider who but St Paul *could* have been the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, it is probable that he will not long have any doubt about the matter. That the epistle displays an immense fund of Jewish learning—such, indeed, as none of the apostles but St Paul, and perhaps Barnabas, can be supposed to have possessed, is not only admitted but contended for by Michaelis; that its author likewise understood thoroughly the Christian scheme, must be evident to every man who has read the epistle with attention, and has himself any tolerable notion of that scheme; and that Barnabas, who is represented by St Luke as not so fluent a speaker as St Paul, was the author of an epistle more eloquent than St Paul has been thought capable of writing, * as it is not likely in itself, is given up by Michaelis; whilst he

(*a*) Heb. xiii. 24.

* One of the objections usually made to St Paul's being the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, is, that it is written in purer Greek and in a more flow-

ing style than his other epistles; though it is acknowledged at the same time that the Greek of some parts of the other epistles is very pure!

acknowledges that St Paul, in some of his speeches, especially at Athens, displays that eloquence and retundity of periods, which characterise the epistle in question. But if all this be true, may we not ask, what Christian but St Paul, was in the year 66, or in any year before the destruction of Jerusalem, at once so thoroughly acquainted with the Jewish and Christian religions, and, occasionally at least, so eloquent as the author of the epistle to the Hebrews? Our critic acknowledges, that the subject of the abolition of the Levitical law, and of its inefficacy even to the Jews themselves, is treated in a more clear and comprehensive manner in the epistle to the Hebrews than in any other book of the New Testament; he contends on all occasions, I think very unreasonably, that none but the apostles were endowed with the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost: and is it possible that the man who thought thus, could really be of opinion that an unknown, anonymous letter-writer, destitute of all these gifts, was capable of treating a subject so important to the progress of the Gospel, in a more masterly manner than all the apostles, on whom the gifts of the Holy Ghost were bestowed for no other purpose than to enable them to propagate the Gospel? Such appears not to have been always his opinion.

In the second chapter of his work, where he treats of the authenticity of the New Testament at large, after having proved by the arguments which have been already quoted from him, (a) that St Paul and none else could be the author of the epistles to the Galatians and Thessalonians, he adds;

“To the Jewish converts likewise, who were in danger of becoming apostates from the religion, which they had adopted, the same apostle represents the greatness of their crime, if they rejected a religion, to which God bore witness with signs and wonders, and with divers gifts of the Holy Ghost. (b) And he reminds them in another passage, (c) that they had tasted of the heavenly gift (i. e. the New covenant), and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost. To suppose that an impostor could write to the converts or adversaries to the new religion not only these, (d) but even subsequent epistles, with a degree of triumph over his opponents, and yet maintain his authority, implies ignorance and stupidity, hardly to be believed in any man, not only in the Hebrews and Galatians, but even in the inhabitants of Thessalonica and Corinth, cities which never lay under the weight of so heavy a suspicion.” This is true; but pray, how much more rational would it have been in the Hebrews, who were committed to the apostleship of St Peter, and in Jerusalem, to the episcopal superintendence of St James, both unquestionably apostles and inspired, to have paid the smallest regard to an anonymous letter written by an uninspired and unknown individual? If such conduct would have been equally foolish, with paying regard to an impostor, it follows, on Michaelis's own principles, that St Paul must not only have been the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, but also have been *known* to be the author by those, to whom that epistle was immediately sent, and by whom it was so faithfully preserved.

It appears therefore, that there is no reason whatever for calling in question the authenticity of any one of those books of the New Testament, which, in the days of Eusebius, were considered as of doubtful authority, though acknowledged by the greater part of Christians to be canonical Scripture. To the authenticity of the *four Gospels*, the *Acts of the apostles*, and the *fourteen epistles of St Paul*, no objection was ever made by Christians of any denomination; though some of the early heretics admitted the inspiration of such of these tracts only as they thought most favourable to their own peculiar notions. We have indeed seen that it was utterly impossible, at any period, since the commencement of the Christian era, to forge such books as the *Gospels* and *Acts*, and impose them on the church as the genuine writings of those apostles and

(a) *Supra*, p. 14, and 15. of this Introduction.

(b) Heb. ii. 1—4.

(c) *Ibid* vi. 4, 5.

(d) The epistles to the Galatians and Hebrews, the first to the Thessalonians; and the first to the Corinthians.

evangelists to whom they are ascribed; we have seen likewise that it was equally impossible, at the period when St Paul is said to have lived, and for at least two generations after it, to have gained the smallest credit to the epistles ascribed to him, if these epistles had not been genuine; and the citations that we have from them in writings of the third generation, prove that they were then considered as authentic. "In the remaining works of Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertulian, there are, says Lardner (*a*), perhaps more and larger quotations from the small volume of the New Testament, than from all the works of Cicero in the writings of all characters for several ages." Of these quotations, at least their full share are made from the epistles of St Paul; and if the epistle of St James, the second of St Peter, the second and third of St John, together with the epistle of St Jude, be less frequently quoted, the omission may easily be accounted for. Converts from the philosophical schools of Athens and Alexandria, very soon introduced into the church, questions of deep discussion; and they in their turn generated heresies, for the confutation of which these five epistles furnished no arguments. The case was very different with respect to the *epistles of St Paul, the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the first epistle of St John*; and as almost all the writings of the early fathers of the church, after the apostolic age, are in a greater or less degree controversial, citations from all these tracts abound in them, whilst there is nothing in the epistles of St James, &c. that could have been introduced into those controversies without impertinence. All these epistles, however, are recognised, as we have seen, by the council of Laodicea; and it is evident that the intention of the members of that council was not to *decree* for the first time what books were to be received as canonical Scripture, but to declare what were *not* to be so received. They decree "that *Psalms composed by private men* (*ψαλμοὶ ἰδιωτικοί*), or uncanonical books, ought not to be read in the church; but only the canonical books of the *Old and New Testaments*," and then they proceed to enumerate those books; but when they speak of *uncanonical* and *canonical* books before that enumeration, they surely must mean that the canon of Scripture had been settled long before they assembled, though the increase of heretical books had then made it necessary for the information of the people, to distinguish the true from the false. They could not probably enumerate all the books that were to be rejected; but their purpose was served by enumerating those which the church had received, and forbidding all others to be read in the public service, as canonical Scripture.

There has in different ages been much controversy concerning the nature and extent of that inspiration under which the apostles and evangelists wrote the books of the New Testament. This question was maturely considered by Warburton; and as the conclusion to which he arrived, after stating the arguments fairly and forcibly for all the opinions that have been held by men of any eminence, is now, I believe, universally admitted. I shall give it in his own words (*b*).

Of this inspiration we can from the premises deduce no other notion but this—"That the Holy Spirit so directed the pens of these writers, that no considerable error should fall from them;—by enlightening them with his immediate influence in all such matters as were necessary for the instruction of the church, and which, either through ignorance or prejudice, they might otherwise have represented imperfectly, partially, or falsely; and by preserving them by the more ordinary means of Providence, from mistakes of consequence, concerning those things, of which they had acquired a competent knowledge by the common way of information. In a word, by watching over them incessantly; but with so suspended a hand, as permitted the use, and left them to the guidance, of their own faculties, while they kept clear of error, and then only in-

(*a*) Recapitulation, vol. xii. p. 53.

(*b*) See his *Doctrine of Grace*, &c. book i. ch. 7

terposing when, without that Divine assistance, they would have been in danger of falling."

That this is the true notion of the inspiration by which the Christian Scriptures were written, can admit of no rational doubt among Christians themselves; for it is the very inspiration by which St Paul himself says that he wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians. Treating of the expediency or in expediency of marriage in those days of persecution, he says—(a) "Unto the married I command, yet *not I*, but *the Lord*, Let not the wife depart from her husband; but to the rest *speak I*, not *the Lord*, If any man have a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away;" and afterwards, (b) when he declares it to be his judgment that a widow would be happier by remaining in that state than by being married to another husband, he speaks with some diffidence of that judgment being directed by the Spirit of God:—"She is happier, says he, if she so abide, after my judgment; and I *think* also that I have the Spirit of God"—δοκῶ δὲ καὶ πνεῦμα Θεοῦ ἔχειν. Nor need any man be alarmed at our not being able, on this moderated notion of inspiration, to distinguish between those parts of Scripture which were written under the immediate and supernatural influence of the Spirit of God, and those which were the product of human knowledge directed, as in every pious and honest man it is always directed, by the ordinary influence of the same Blessed Spirit. It is enough for us to know that every sentence of Scripture is infallibly true; and, as the learned and ingenious prelate observes, it is of no consequence to us, whether that truth be secured by direct inspiration, or by that virtual superintendence of the Spirit, which, as it enables every true Christian to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, preserved the apostles and evangelists, when writing the books of the New Testament, from falling into error.

It would be improper to conclude this Introduction, without taking some notice of the immense number of various readings which the industry of modern criticism has discovered in the various manuscripts, ancient and modern, of the Greek Scriptures. These variations are indeed very numerous, and they have given much uneasiness to some weak minds; but there is not one of them that in the smallest degree affects a single article of the Christian faith, or a single duty of Christian practice. The greater number of them go no farther than to substitute one word for another of the same import as connected with the context—as *Κυριος* for *Θεος*, and *vice versa*, or the contraction *καγῶ* for *καὶ ἐγώ*. In some manuscripts of great antiquity, passages of considerable length are indeed omitted, as the story of the woman taken in adultery, which we have in the received text of the Gospel by St John viii. 3—12. and what is said of the heavenly witnesses in the first epistle of the same apostle, v. 7, 8. but of these passages the former affects not in the smallest degree either the faith or the practice of a Christian; and I would have a very poor opinion of the intellectual powers of that man, who should lay great stress on the latter as a proof of the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity. "It is not agreed among the orthodox themselves, that this text relates to the consubstantiality of the three persons in the Godhead. It is my opinion that it does not; and this I take to be the reason,—that it is so seldom alleged by the ancient writers in proof of the Trinity." These are the words of Bishop Horsley, (c) and they express sentiments that have long been mine; but the consubstantiality of the three persons in the Godhead can be proved by so many other texts, of which the authenticity has never been called in question, that we should lose nothing essential to the faith by abandoning this text as an interpolation. The faith, indeed, is so completely supported by every manuscript, that Michaelis somewhere informs us, that his countrymen, who expected to accomplish great things by the collation of manuscripts and ancient versions, had, when

(a) Ch. vii. 10. 12.
page 387. Ed. 1812.

(b) Ibid. v. 40.

(c) Tracts in controversy with Dr Priestley,

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he gave the last edition of his *Introduction*, &c. to the public, lost much of their relish for such employment, from the little that they had gained by the labours of Wetstein and Griesbach. Both these critics are known to have had a strong bias to the doctrine of the Unitarians; but their labours have tended rather to confirm than render doubtful, the faith, which was once delivered to the saints.]

THE HISTORY

OF THE

BIBLE.

BOOK VIII.

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF THINGS FROM THE BIRTH OF CHRIST
TO THE COMPLETION OF THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT,
IN ALL ABOUT 97 YEARS.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE BIRTH OF CHRIST TO THE BEGINNING
OF THE FIRST PASSOVER.

THE HISTORY.

AS soon as the time, foretold by the prophets, † for the incarnation of the Son of God, From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

† The two principal prophets, who determine the period when our Lord was to appear in the world, are Daniel and Haggai. Daniel foretels, that at "the end of the seventy prophetic weeks," i. e. at the expiration of four hundred years after the building of the walls of Jerusalem, "the Messiah should come," chap. ix. 25. and Haggai prophesies, that, before the destruction of the second temple, (even when the sceptre was departed from Judah, Gen. xlix. 10.) the "Desire of all Nations should come," and, by his frequent personal appearance in the temple, make the "glory of that latter house much greater than that of the former," chap. ii. 7, &c.

A. M. 3999,
&c. or 5406.
Ant. Chris.
1, &c.
ant. Ær.
Vulg. 5.

began to draw near, † the evangelist St Luke gives us this account of the birth of his great forerunner, John the Baptist †².

While his father †³ Zacharias (who was a priest of the eighth course, viz. the course

† The word *Ευαγγέλιον* signifies, in general, *good news*, and is of the same import with our Saxon word *gospel*; only, in the sacred use of them both, there seems to be a metonymy, whereby the words that denote good news, are set to signify the history of that good news, viz. of the birth and life, the miracles and doctrine, the death and resurrection, of our Saviour Christ; all of which put together do make up the joyful tidings which we call the *Gospel*; and from this etymology of the words, the persons who have recorded the life and actions of our Saviour, are called *evangelists*, or *writers of the Gospel*. The works of this kind, which are received as canonical, are but four, viz. that of St Matthew, St Mark, St Luke, and St John; but the spurious pieces which are handed down to us, even though several of them be lost, do exceed the number of forty. The truth is, the ancient heretics began generally with attacking the gospels, in order either to maintain their errors or excuse them. To this purpose, some rejected all the genuine gospels, and substituted others that were spurious in their room. This produced the gospels of Barnabas, Apelles, Basilides, Cerinthus, the Ebonites, and Gnostics. Others corrupted the true gospels, by suppressing whatever gave them any trouble, and inserting whatever might favour their erroneous doctrines. Thus the Nazarenes corrupted the original gospel of St Matthew, as the Marcionites did that of St Luke; while the Alogians rejected St John, as the Ebonites did St Matthew; and the Valentinians only acknowledged St John, as the Cerinthians did St Mark. *Hammond's Annotations*, *M. Fabricius's Codex Apocryphus N. Test.* *Calmet's Dictionary* under the word *Gospel*, and *White's* Bampton Lectures.

†² There are two places in the prophets referred to, both by our Saviour and his evangelists, wherein the Baptist is described under this character. The former is in the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert an highway for our God," chap. xl. 3. and the latter (which is more plain and express) is in Malachi, "Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me," &c. chap. iii. 1. Both the passages allude to harbingers, and such other officers as, upon the journeys of princes, are employed to take care that the ways should be levelled and put in order, and all such obstructions removed, as might hinder their passage, or render it less commodious; and the manner in which the Baptist thus prepared the way of the Lord was by his preaching and by his baptism. By his preaching, he endeavoured to bring the Jews to a due sense of their sins; to abate their confidence in being of Abraham's seed, and punctual observers of the ceremonial law; and to forewarn all of the dreadful effects of God's anger, who did not bring forth fruits worthy of repentance: And by his baptism, when administered to such persons as were under the obligation of the law, he plainly shewed, that he was therein admit-

ting them to some privileges which they had not before, viz. the remission of their sins upon their faith and obedience to him, who was the "Messenger of the covenant." Since therefore the Baptist was born six months before our Saviour, and entered upon his ministry six months before our Saviour began his; and since no part of his doctrine terminated in himself, and his baptism referred every one to Christ for acceptance and salvation; he is very properly said to be his harbinger, "a messenger sent to prepare his way before him," or to set all things in readiness for his approach, by putting an end to the old, and making an entrance into the new dispensation; in which sense he is represented by the fathers, as a kind of middle partition between the law and the Gospel; of the law, as a thing now come to a period, and of the Gospel, as commencing under him who was shortly to make his appearance. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. i.

†³ Some of the fathers were of opinion, that this Zacharias was at this time high priest, upon a false supposition, that the offering of incense was reserved to the high priest only: But besides the testimony of Josephus, who tells us expressly, that Simon, the son of Boethus, was high priest this year, it appears from St Luke himself, that Zacharias was no more than an ordinary priest, of the family or course of Abia, which, of the four and twenty courses appointed by David for the service of the temple when it should be built, was the eighth, 1 Chron. xxiv. 10. For though it was the high priest's prerogative, on the great day of expiation, to enter into the holy of holies, and there burn incense, which no ordinary priest might do, Levit. xvi. 12.; yet, in the common service of the day, each priest, whose lot it was, went every morning and evening into the Sanctum, or body of the temple, and there burnt the daily incense upon the altar, which was placed before the veil of the most holy place, Exod. xxx. 6, &c. For these, and several other reasons which annotators have produced, it seems plain, that Zacharias could not possibly be high priest at this time; and whatever credit may be given to the tradition,—That, by the order of Herod the Great, he was put to death between the porch and the altar, viz. in the inclosure that surrounded the altar of burnt offerings; and that, when every one was ignorant of his murder, a certain priest, thinking that he staid too long, entered into the temple, and found him dead, and his blood congealed upon the ground, and, at the same time, hearing a voice, that it should never be wiped out until his revenger came;—whatever credit, I say, may be given to this tradition, it was doubtless upon this foundation that many of the ancients thought that Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, was that Zachariah, son of Barachiah, mentioned by our Saviour in the Gospel, whose blood was shed "between the temple and the altar." *Pool's* and *Whitby's* Annotations, and *Calmet's Dictionary*.

of Abia) was executing his office at Jerusalem (which was in the latter part of the reign of Herod the Great †), it came to his lot †² to go into the temple with his censer in his hand, in order to burn incense, while the people without were †³ offering up their supplications in the court that was called the court of Israel. At the altar of incense †⁴ he was greatly surprised with the sight of an angel standing on the right side of it; but the angel soon dissipated his fears with the joyful news, that God intended to bless him with a son, whose name should be John, who would prove a person of uncommon merit, and be appointed to the office of harbinger †⁵ to the Messiah, who in a short time was to make his appearance.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

The sense of his own great age, as well as his wife's long sterility, made Zacharias ||

† St Luke, in particular, takes notice, that the time when our Lord's forerunner was to be conceived was in the reign of Herod, son of Antipater (for it was Herod Antipas that put him to death), commonly called the Great, who, under the Romans, fought his way to the government of the Jews, and came to his throne by the slaughter of their sanhedrim, by which means he extinguished all the dominion which, till that time, they held in the tribe of Judah, not in a single person indeed (for that was extinguished in the Asmonæan family), but in a select number out of that royal tribe, and so verified the prophecy of old Jacob, Gen. xlix. 10. "that the sceptre, or government, was departed from Judah, and the lawgiver from his feet," which was a certain sign that Shiloh, i. e. the Messiah, was shortly to come. *Pool's* Annotations.

†² The several courses of the priests began on the Sabbath-day, and continued to serve till the Sabbath following; but because they were now encreased to a great number (Josephus tells us that there were no less than a thousand in each course), there were several parts of the priestly office (whereof burning of incense was one), which the course that then ministered seems to have divided among themselves, for the week that they were to attend, by lot. *Pool's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†³ A Jewish congregation, for the most part, consisted of all the priests of the course, which was then in waiting, of the Levites, and of certain stationary men, as they called them, who represented the body of the people, besides some other accidental worshippers; and, when the priest went into the sanctuary, or within the first veil, to offer incense, notice was given, by the sound of a bell, that it was then the time of prayer, whereupon every one present offered up his supplications to God silently: And though this silent prayer was not commanded, yet there seems a manifest allusion to it in those words of St John, where, "at the offering of incense, with the prayers of the saints," it is said, "there was silence in heaven for half an hour," Rev. viii. 1, &c. Nor is that passage in Ecclesiasticus, chap. l. 19, 20. any bad representation of this part of the Jewish worship, "And the people besought the Lord, the Most High, by prayer, before him that is merciful, till the solemnity of the Lord was ended; and then he went down (viz. Simon the high priest), and lifted up his hands over the whole congregation of the children of Israel, to give the blessing of the Lord with his lips. *Hammond's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†⁴ The Jews had a peculiar notion, that such like apparitions were always fatal to those that had them, and a sure token of their instantaneous death, Gen. xvi. 7. xxii. 11, 15. Exod. xx. 19, &c.: but if this were not, it is natural for men to be affrightened at sudden and unusual things, especially at any divine appearances, whether of God himself taking a visible shape, or authorizing an angel so to do. For though God does not make the appearances to affrighten us, yet such is the imbecility of our nature, that we cannot but be startled at them; and reason good there is, that God, by this means, should both declare his own glory and majesty, and humble his poor creatures, in order to make them more susceptible of his Divine Revelations. *Pool's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

†⁵ This word is derived from the Hebrew *Mashach*, to anoint, and is the very same with *ἁγιάζεις*, the anointed, in Greek. It is a name sometimes given to the kings and high priests of the Hebrews, 1 Sam. xii. 5, &c. Psal. cv. 15. but principally, and by way of eminence, it belongs to that Sovereign Deliverer who was expected by the Jews, and whom they vainly expect even to this day, since he is already come at the appointed time in the person of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. The Jews were used to anoint kings, high priests, and sometimes prophets. Saul, David, Solomon, and Joash, kings of Judah, received the royal unction; Aaron and his sons received the sacerdotal; and Elisha received the prophetic, at least God ordered Elijah to give it to him. But now, though JESUS CHRIST united in his own person all the offices of prophet, priest, and king, yet we nowhere find that he received any outward or sensible unction; and therefore the unction, which the prophets and apostles speak of with regard to him, is the spiritual and internal unction of grace and the Holy Ghost, of which the outward unction was no more than a figure and symbol. *Calmet's* Dictionary.

|| The words of Zacharias to the angel are, "Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years," Luke i. 18. much of the same import with those of Abraham upon a like occasion, "Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit the land of Canaan?" Gen. xv. 8. How then came it to pass, that Abraham was gratified with a sign in the same request for which Zacharias was punished with dumbness? Now, though there may be a great similitude in the words which are spoken by several persons, yet there may, at the same time, be a very

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express a kind of diffidence in this promise, and, for his farther satisfaction, desire some miracle in confirmation of it: whereupon the angel let him know, "That he was no less than Gabriel, a special attendant on God's throne, and dispatched on purpose to inform him of this great happiness; but that, since he was so incredulous as to require a sign, he should have such an one as would be both a punishment of his unbelief, and a confirmation of his faith; for, until the birth of the child, he should be both deaf * and dumb;" which accordingly came to pass: for when he came out to the people, (who waited to (a) receive his benediction) he made signs that he was not able to speak to them, and they thence inferred that he had seen some extraordinary vision within. After the time of his ministration, however, was over, he returned home, and it was not long before his wife Elizabeth perceived herself with child, though her modesty made her conceal it for the space of five months.

Six months after Elizabeth's conception, the same angel Gabriel † was sent to Nazareth, a city of Galilee, to a virgin named ‡ Mary, (a near relation to Elizabeth, and of the house of David) who had lately been †² espoused to one Joseph, a person of the

considerable difference in the heart and habit of mind from whence they proceed, which, we must all allow, God can see much better than we can perceive by words. In relation to Abraham, then, the Holy Spirit bears him testimony, that "he staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully persuaded, that what he had promised he was able to perform," Rom. iv. 19, 20, &c.; and therefore if he asked a sign, it was not to beget, but to nourish and confirm this faith in him. But in Zacharias, the asking of a sign savoured of perfect infidelity, in that he believed not an angel appearing to him in the name of the Lord, and in a place where evil angels durst not come: An angel, telling him his prayer was heard, which evil angels could not know; and acquainting him with things which tended to the glory of God, the completion of his promises, and the welfare of mankind, which evil angels would not do. His punishment therefore was the just result of his unbelief; but (what shews the mercy of God in inflicting it) it was a punishment of such a nature as carried with it an answer to his desire, being no more than a privation of speech until the words of the angel were fulfilled. *Pool's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

* [The original word σιωπᾶν does not anywhere else in the New Testament signify a deaf person, and surely the context does not require that it should be taken in that sense here. The punishment of Zacharias's incredulity must have been more striking, and, I should think, better calculated to serve its purpose, if he was permitted to hear what was said to him, whilst he was rendered unable to answer. See *Schleusner* on the word.]

(a) Numb. vi. 24.

† Nazareth was a city of the lower Galilee, situate in the south part of that province, and so not far from the confines of Samaria to the south, and nearer to the territories of Tyre and Sidon to the north-west. According to Mr Maundrell's account, in his journey from Aleppo, it is at present only an inconsiderable village, lying in a kind of round concave valley, on the top of an high hill. Here is a convent built over what is said to be the place of the annunciation, or

where the Blessed Virgin received the joyful message brought her by the angel. It is built over the place, I say, because the chamber where she received the angel's salutation was above four hundred and fifty years ago removed from Nazareth, and, according to the Roman legends, transported by angels to Loretto, then a small village in the pope's dominions, but now become a city and bishop's see. Here is likewise the house of Joseph, the very same (as the friars of the convent tell you) wherein the Son of God lived for near thirty years in subjection to man; and, not far distant from thence, they shew you the synagogue, wherein our blessed Saviour preached that sermon, (Luke iv. 16.) whereby his countrymen were so exasperated, that they rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill, whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong, Luke iv. 28, 29. for which reason that brow is to this day called the mountain of precipitation. *Wells's* Geography of the New Testament.

‡ In our translation, the words in the text run thus:—"To a virgin, espoused to a man, whose name was Joseph, of the house of David"; but, in my opinion, they might better be placed in this manner:—"To a virgin, of the house of David, espoused to a man, whose name was Joseph, and the virgin's name was Mary;" because this agrees better with the words of the angel, "the Lord God shall give him the throne of his father David." For, since the angel had plainly told the virgin that she should have this son without the knowledge of any man, it was not Joseph's, but Mary's being of the house of David, that made David his father. Of her immediate parents, however, the Scripture tells us nothing, not so much as their names; but from tradition we learn, that she was the daughter of Joachim and Anna, of the royal tribe of Judah, and yet related to the race of Aaron, because Elizabeth, the wife of Zacharias, was her cousin. *Whitby's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Dictionary under the word. [See however the Answer to the ensuing Objection.]

†² Espousing or betrothing was nothing else but a solemn promise of marriage, made by two persons, each to other, at such a distance of time as they

same pedigree indeed, but of no higher profession than that of a carpenter. The angel approaching the pious maid, began to congratulate her with "being highly in the favour of God, and blessed above all the rest of her sex; because she should have the happiness of bearing a son, called by the name of Jesus † or Saviour, the long expected Messiah, to whom God would give the throne of his father David †², and of whose sovereignty and dominion there should be no end."

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

Conscious of her own virtue, and yet surprised at this uncommon appearance and salutation, the Holy Virgin †³ began to expostulate with the heavenly messenger the possibility of the thing, since she had all along lived in a strict state of virginity †⁴. But

agreed upon. The manner of performing this espousal was either by a writing or by a piece of silver given to the bride, or by cohabitation. The writing that was prepared on these occasions ran in this form:—"On such a day of such a month, in such a year, A, the son of A, has said to B, the daughter of B, 'Be thou my spouse according to the law of Moses and the Israelites, and I will give thee for the portion of thy virginity the sum of two hundred zuzims, as it is ordained by the law.' And the said B has consented to become his spouse, upon these conditions, which the said A has promised to perform upon the day of marriage. To this the said A obliges himself; and for this he engages all his goods, even as far as the cloak which he wears upon his shoulder. Moreover, he promises to perform all that is intended in contracts of marriage in favour of the Israelitish women. Witnesses A, B, C." The promise by a piece of silver, and without writing, was made before witnesses, when the young man said to his mistress, "Receive this piece of silver, as a pledge that you shall become my spouse." Lastly, the engagement by cohabitation (according to the Rabbins) was allowed by law, Deut. xxiv. 1. but it had been wisely forbidden by the ancients, because of the abuses that might happen, and to prevent the inconvenience of clandestine marriages. After such espousal was made, (which was generally when the parties were young) the woman continued with her parents several months, if not some years, (at least till she was arrived at the age of puberty) before she was brought home, and her marriage consummated: for so we find that Samson's wife remained with her parents a considerable time after espousal, Judg. xiv. 8. and that the Blessed Virgin was discernibly with child before she and her intended husband came together, Matt. i. 18. Whether this method of betrothing was at first ordained, or only approved by God, Deut. xx. 7. or whether it be now of any obligation to us Christians, we shall not pretend to determine. It is certain, that it has nothing that is typical, nothing of the carnal ordinance in it, but something very proper and convenient, viz. that the parties contracted may have some intermediate time to think seriously of the great change they are going to make in their conditions; to discourse more freely together about their domestic affairs; and to implore God's blessing and protection over them and theirs, in all the changes and chances of this mortal life. *Pool's Annotations*, and *Cabmet's Dictionary* under the word *Marriage*.

† We read but of few instances in Scripture,

where men had names determined for them by particular appointment from heaven, and before the time of their birth; and, as such names appear to be very significant, so the persons distinguished by them were always remarkable for some extraordinary qualities or events which their respective names were designed to denote. Our Lord's name, indeed, in sense and substance, is the same with Joshua, that famous leader heretofore, who, after the death of Moses, settled the Israelites in the promised land, and subdued the enemies that opposed their entrance into it. But as that earthly was a figure of the heavenly Canaan, so was the captain of that eminent type of our salvation; and if he was worthy to be called a saviour, much more is this Jesus what his name imports; for he delivers us from the heaviest of all bondages, and from the most formidable of all enemies, as he, and he only, it is who "saves his people from their sins." *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. i.

†² The prophets, in their predictions, are very full and express, that the Messiah should be a great king, and descend from the line of David; vid. Psal. x. 16. Isaiah ix. 6, 7. Dan. vii. 14. and Ezek. xxvi. 7. and therefore the angel, in his message to Mary, characterizes him as a successor to that prince's throne, and seems to accommodate himself, in some measure, to the prejudices of the Jews, and perhaps of the virgin mother herself, who, being bred up in the synagogue, might expect that the Messiah should be a temporal prince as well as they: But our Lord's kingdom (as himself plainly declares) "is not of this world," nor of the like nature with other empires upon earth. His reign is in the hearts and minds of men; and his dominion is in the church, against which "the gates of hell shall not prevail," and in which, "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, Isa. ix. 7. until the end cometh, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father," 1 Cor. xv. 24. *Cabmet's Commentary*.

†³ The words of her expostulation are, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" Which some look upon as no more than a reply of admiration, and a desire to be further informed in what manner God intended to effect such a wonderful work; though others perceive in them some small indications of diffidence, but what might be more excusable, because there had been no such precedent of the Divine power made in the world, as to cause a "virgin to conceive and bring forth a son." *Pool's Annotations*.

†⁴ Some are of opinion that Mary, very early in

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the angel, to satisfy her in this particular, told her, That this wonderful work was to be effected by the invisible power and operation of the Holy Ghost †; and to shew her that nothing was impossible to the Almighty, gave her to understand, that her cousin Elizabeth (notwithstanding her old age and former sterility) had been now six months with child: Whereupon the Holy Virgin humbly acquiesced in whatever God had determined to do with her; and as soon as the angel was departed, made preparations for her journey to Hebron †², where her cousin Elizabeth lived.

As soon as she arrived at Zacharias's house, Elizabeth, upon hearing her first salutation, perceived that the child †³ sprang in her womb, and being inspired with the Holy Ghost, she cried out, "Blessed art thou above thy sex! Blessed is the fruit of thy body! And how vast is my felicity to be visited by the mother of my Lord!" And having by the same prophetic spirit assured Mary of the accomplishment of every thing that the angel had told her, she so transported the blessed Virgin, that she broke out into a rapture of thanksgiving †⁴ to God, wherein she recounted his mercies, and the promises

her life, had made a vow of perpetual chastity, and that Joseph was appointed her husband, not to live with her in the ordinary use of marriage, but merely to be the guardian of her virginity: But, besides that no vows of perpetual virginity were ever in use among the Jews, it can hardly be supposed that a Jewish woman, in whom barrenness was reputed a reproach, and looked upon as a curse, would be ever induced to make one. Among the precepts of the law, the Jewish doctors account matrimony to be one, Gen. i. 28. from which none are exempted but they who devote themselves wholly to the study of the law: But since this was not the Blessed Virgin's case, it reflects a dishonour upon her memory to imagine, that, after she had entered into such a vow, she should admit of an espousal to Joseph, which could be for no other end but merely to mock him. *Pool's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

† The words in the text are, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee;" wherein, according to the usual modesty of Scripture language, is implied all that action of the Holy Ghost, whereby the Blessed Virgin was enabled to become fruitful, and the place of ordinary generation was in this case supplied. Now when this action is in Scripture represented as entirely the work of God, and yet is attributed to the Holy Ghost in particular, we are not to understand it so peculiarly his, that the two other persons subsisting in the Godhead should have no concern in it: For here that rule of the schools takes place, that the entire union of the Divine nature makes all such actions common to all three, as do not refer to the properties and relations by which they stand distinguished from each other. As therefore the Holy Spirit began the first creation by moving (or brooding as it were) upon the face of the waters, so did he here begin the new creation, by conveying a principle or power of fruitfulness into a person otherwise incapable of it: And yet, as there, without the Father and his Divine Word or Son, "not any thing was made that was made," John i. 3. so did he here bring this second, "this creation of a new thing," Jer. xxxi. 22. to effect, by the same co-operation of the whole undivided trinity, as he had done the former. *Stanhope*

on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. i.

†² This very probably was the place where Zacharias and Elizabeth lived, and where John the Baptist was born, because it was not only one of the cities appointed for the priests to dwell in, Josh. xx. 7. but situated likewise in mountains, which, running cross the middle of Judea from south to north, gave to the tract which they run along the name of the hill country. Hebron was ten leagues distant from Jerusalem, and about forty from Nazareth, which made it a long journey for the Blessed Virgin, had not her zeal to go and partake in her cousin's joy (more than to satisfy her curiosity, whether what the angel had told her was true) made her surmount all difficulties. *Wells's* Geography of the New Testament, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

†³ It is said indeed of the Baptist, that he "should be filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb;" and from hence some have thought, that this extraordinary motion of the child in Elizabeth was an act of his own, and proceeded from a sensation of joy which himself felt at the salutation of the Blessed Virgin: But besides that "being filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb," means no more than that the power of the Holy Ghost should be discerned to be upon him very early, it is certain that infants in the womb are not capable of any joy themselves, as having no apprehensions of good to be enjoyed or evil to be avoided; but as they are sensibly affected with the joy, or grief, or surprize of the parent to whom they are united; must the uncommon motion of the child at this conjuncture must be occasioned by the joy which transported his mother. *Hammond's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†⁴ It was customary among the Jews, for pious and devout persons, when they found themselves inspired, upon great and solemn occasions, to celebrate the praises of God in songs made on purpose. Several of this kind we meet with in the Old Testament; but this of the Blessed Virgin is the first that occurs in the New, and for the majesty of its style, the nobleness of its sentiments, and that spirit of piety which runs through the whole, is inferior to none. *Calmet's* Commentary.

which he had made to the people of Israel, and which, by making her the blessed instrument of them, he was now about to fulfil.

About three months Mary continued with her cousin Elizabeth, and then returned home. Elizabeth not long after was delivered of a son; but on the eighth day †, when the child was to be circumcised and named, his relations and friends were not a little surprised to hear that he was to be called John †², since none of the family bore that name; but their surprise became much greater, when they found that, upon this occasion, his father's speech was immediately restored to him, which he employed in the praises of Almighty God, who had wrought such prodigies among them.

The Holy Virgin being returned to Nazareth, still concealed the mystery which God had wrought in her from her espoused husband, but her pregnant symptoms soon discovered it; and though her deportment had been extremely chaste and modest, yet he might be well assured that she was with child. This raised no little concern in his breast; but being a merciful good man ‖, and unwilling either to expose the honour of her family, which he thought she had stained, or to inflict public punishment upon her, (a) according to the sentence of the law, he resolved upon a separation †³ with the utmost

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1

† The Jews had a positive command in their law, that no child should be circumcised before the eighth day; because the mother for seven days was reputed unclean, and so was the child by touching her, Lev. xii. 1, 2; but the law appointed no certain place in which circumcision was to be done, nor any certain person that was to perform it; neither did it enjoin that the child should have his name given him at that time, only the custom prevailed of doing it then; because, when God instituted the rite, he changed the names of Abraham and Sarah. *Whitby's Annotations.*

†² The Jews, from their first beginning, seem to have made it a point of religion to give such names to their children as were significative either of God's mercy to them, or of their duty to God, and the word *ἰωάννης*—translated *John*—signifies a person enjoying the Divine favour.] From the whole passage, however, before us, including the objections made to this name, it appears to have been a custom which, though certainly not ancient, was introduced at least in the days of Zacharias, to call children by the name of their parents or the nearest relation (as it is usual now among us), if there was no particular reason to the contrary. *Pool's Annotations, Calmet's Commentary, and Schleusner's Lexicon.*

‖ The words in the text, as we translate them, are —“Joseph her husband being a just man.” But if he was a just man, and was satisfied that his intended wife had, some way or other, violated her chastity, (as he knew nothing to the contrary at that time), instead of screening her crime, he ought to have brought her to punishment, Deut. xxii. 20, 21. Now it is to be observed, that, upon the discovery of his wife's pregnancy, Joseph had the choice of three things; 1st, Either he might (notwithstanding this) have taken her to his house as his wife, because the law of divorce laid none under an obligation, but gave a permission only (in case of some discovered uncleanness) to put away the wife: Or, 2dly, He might give her a bill of divorcement, either in public or in private, (for that was left to his option), either before two or three witnesses, or before a proper magistrate, and that without specifying any crime against her:

Or, 3dly, He might, according to the law, have brought her upon her trial, whether in the matter of her pregnancy she had suffered a rape, or was herself consenting, Deut. xxii. 23, 24. Had therefore Joseph done the first of these, he must have acted counter to his own honour, and have incurred the common reproach, that he “who retained an adulteress is a fool.” Had he done the last of these, he was not sure of convicting her; because, upon examination, it might appear that she had been forced; and in that case the man that did it was to die, Deut. xxii. 25 or she might have been with child before her betrothing, and in that case she was only obliged to marry the person that had abused her, Ver. 28, 29. Upon the whole, therefore, Joseph thought it the best and justest way to proceed upon the foot of a divorce. Mary's being visibly with child was reason sufficient to authorise his parting with her; but he did not know for certain that she was guilty of adultery, or that consequently she deserved to die; and therefore he did not think it right, by bringing her upon her trial, to expose her. *Pool's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary, and Spanheim's Dub. Evang. part i. Dub. 31.*

(a) Deut. xxii. 23.

†³ The common way of separation among the Jews was, by the man's giving the woman a letter of divorce. This in their language is called *gheth*, and the substance of it is to this effect:—“On such a day, month, and year, and at such a place, I A, divorce you voluntarily, put you away, and restore you to your liberty, even you B, who was heretofore my wife, and I permit you to marry whom you please.” When the day of divorce comes, the Rabbi that attends, having strictly examined both parties, and finding that they are resolved to part, bids the woman open her hands; and when she has received the deed, to close them both together, lest it should chance to fall to the ground. The man, when he gives her the parchment, (for on parchment the bill of divorce was to be wrote, in the presence of two rabbins, and with many other trifling circumstances) tells her, “here is thy divorce. I put thee away from me, and leave thee at liberty to marry whom thou pleasest;” and

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privacy: but before he came to put it to execution, an angel from heaven † appeared to him in a vision, informing him, "That his wife's conception was the immediate work of the Holy Ghost, and that she should bear a son, the same person (α) whom the prophet had foretold under the name of Emanuel, or God with us:" Whereupon Joseph was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but taking the Holy Virgin home to him, he lived with her, to all outward appearance, in conjugal love, though he certainly had no carnal knowledge of her †² till she was delivered of her first-born son, who, by a lineal descent, was true heir to the kingdom of Israel, as sprung from the house of David.

Some time before this, Augustus Cæsar had issued out a general edict, that all persons in the Roman empire, with their estates and conditions, should be registered at certain appointed places, according to their respective provinces, cities, and families. By virtue of this edict, Joseph and his wife Mary, being both of the tribe of Judah, and family of David, were obliged to go as far as Bethlehem †³, which was the mother-city

when the woman has taken it, and the Rabbi read it over once more, she is entirely free. There is in this ceremony, however, to be remarked, that they always endeavour to have ten or twelve persons at it, besides the two witnesses who sign the deed. When therefore Joseph intended to dismiss Mary privately, it could not be by having no witnesses at all, but as few as the nature of the thing would bear, and by giving her the letter of divorcement into her own hand, which she might suppress if she thought fit, or by inserting no accusation against her in it, in case it came to be read before the company. *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Divorce*. *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

† This vision was in a dream and while he was asleep; and dreams, we know, were one way whereby God revealed his mind to people formerly, Job vii. 14. whereby he made himself known to his prophets, Numb. xii. 6. and not to prophets only, but to pagan princes sometimes, as appears by the instances both of Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar, Gen. xli. 1. Dan. ii. 1. But how to distinguish Divine from natural dreams it is difficult to say, unless it be by the clear and distinct series of their representation, and the forcible impression which they leave upon mens spirits; whereas natural dreams, for the most part, are rambling and inconsistent, and "whoso regardeth them (says the wise son of Sirach) is like him who catcheth at a shadow, or followeth after the wind," Ecclus. xxxiv. 2. *Pool's* Annotations. Why God reveals himself by dreams and in the night-time. Vid. *Spanheim's* Dub. Evang. part ii. Dub. 59.

(α) Isaiah ix. 6.

†² The word first-born, in Scripture, admits of various significations. Sometimes (and most commonly indeed) it denotes the eldest of two or more children, as Eliab is called the first-born of Jesse, 1 Sam. xvii. 13.; at others, the first that is born, without regard to any else, as when God says to "Moses, sanctify me all the first-born, Exod. xiii. 2. In some places it imports figuratively what is most dearly beloved by us; in which sense God frequently calls the Israelites his first-born; and in others, what is most remarkable for greatness or excellency, as God promises David, (who was but a younger brother of the family) to "make him the first-born of the kings of the earth,"

Ps. lxxxix. 27. In any of these three last senses our Saviour might very properly be called his mother's first-born son, for as much as he was really her first child; her most and only beloved; and the most illustrious of his race: but then Joseph's not knowing his wife until she was delivered of her first-born son, seems to imply, that he knew her afterwards. Those who maintain the perpetual virginity of the Blessed Mother, tell us, that *ἕως οὗ*, which we render *until*, in several places in Scripture, has relation only to the time which precedes, and not to that which follows any event; so that "he knew her not until," may be taken in the same sense, as Samuel "came not to see Saul till the day of his death," 1 Sam. xv. 35. i. e. he never came to see him: but, (besides that most of the passages which are produced to this purpose, are far from coming up to the case in hand) since the angel commanded Joseph "to take Mary as his wife," without any intimation that he should not perform the duty of an husband to her, it is not easy to conceive, why he should live twelve years with her, and all that while deny that duty which both the law and the canons of the Jews command the husband to pay his wife, Exod. xxi. 10. If we imagine, that our Saviour would have been dishonoured in any other's lying in the same bed after him, we seem to forget how much he humbled and debased himself in lying in that bed first, and then in a stable, and a manger. But leaving this question to those who affect to be curious beyond what is written, we may safely conclude with St Basil,—"That though it was necessary for the completion of the prophecy, that the mother of our Lord should continue a virgin until she had brought forth her first-born; yet what she was afterwards, it is idle to discuss, because it is of no manner of concern to the mystery." *Howell's* History, in the Notes, *Pool's* and *Whitby's* Annotations, and *Spanheim's* Dub. Evang. part i. Dub. 28.

†³ Bethlehem, where our Saviour was born (for there was another city of the same name in the tribe of Zebulon) is situate on the declivity of an hill, in the tribe of Judah, two leagues distant from Jerusalem, and near thirty from Nazareth; so that we might justly wonder how the Blessed Virgin, big with child as she was, could be able to take so long a journey on foot, (for we hear of no other voiture that she had)

of their tribe, there to have their names and estates enrolled. The great conflux of people upon this occasion had already filled all the inns † and houses of reception, so that no better place could be found for their lodging than a stable, where they had not been long before the Blessed Virgin was delivered of a son, whom (herself performing the office of a midwife †²) she bound in swaddling clothes, and laid down to rest in a manger. But notwithstanding this obscurity of our Saviour's birth, God was pleased, that very night, by the message of an angel, with a radiant light surrounding him, to make a pompous revelation of it to certain poor shepherds who were attending their flocks on the plains of Bethlehem; and after one angel had delivered the joyful tidings, an innumerable company, of the same celestial choir, broke out all together into this triumphant doxology, "Glory be to God on high, peace on earth, and good-will towards men *!

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Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

were it not presumable that the child which she conceived without loss of her virginity, she might be enabled to carry without the sense of any load or uneasiness. What might possibly be the motive of her taking such a journey, is not so well accounted for, by pretending that she was an heiress, and the sole relict of her family, which, upon this occasion, she was obliged to represent; as it is by saying, that this was done by the especial Providence and appointment of God, who ordered this enrolment (which Augustus intended to have had done before) to be delayed to this very time, and then instigated the Blessed Virgin to accompany her husband, that so Christ might be born in Bethlehem, according to the prediction of the prophet, Micah v. 2. and that his lineage and family might at that time be known and preserved in the public tables. The birth indeed of our Blessed Saviour (more than its extent or riches) has made Bethlehem ever since a place of high renown, which is generally visited by pilgrims, and at present is furnished not only with a convent of the Latins, but also with one of the Greeks, and another of the Armenians. Here are shewn you the very place where our Saviour was born; the manger in which he was laid, and the cave or grot in which the Blessed Virgin hid herself and her Divine babe from the malice of Herod, for some time before their departure into Egypt. Here are shewn you likewise the chapel of St Joseph, the supposed father of our Lord; the chapel of the Innocents; as also those of St Jerom, St Paula, and Eustochium. About half a mile eastward from the town, you see the field where the shepherds were watching their flocks when they received the glad tidings of the birth of Christ, and not far from the field, the village where they dwelt. *Whitby's Annotations, Calmet's Commentary, and Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

† The inns in the East are, even to this day, large square buildings, but generally no more than one story high, with a spacious court in the middle of them. Into this court you enter in at a wide gate, and on the right and left-hand meet with rooms that are appointed for travellers to lodge in. Those that come first take the rooms they like best, but must be mindful to provide themselves both with bedding and victuals, because the rooms are perfectly naked, and have no furniture in them. It is some

comfort, however, that for this lodging (such as it is) you will pay nothing, only a small toll to the town as you pass along; and have no reason to fear the loss of any thing you bring with you, because the master of the inn takes great care of the gate at night, and is indeed responsible for the safety of whatever baggage you carry into your lodging. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†² Which she could not have done, to be sure, had she been delivered in the common manner of other women; but it was always the opinion of the church, from the days of Gregory Nazianzen until now, (though before his days there were some opinions to the contrary) that, as there was no sin in the conception, so neither had the virgin any pains in the production; for to her alone the punishment of Eve, that "in sorrow she should bring forth children," did not extend; because, where nothing of sin was the ingredient, there nothing of misery could cohabit. *Taylor's Life of Christ.*

* [It is from the birth of our Saviour that the Christian era is supposed to be dated, but that era was nowhere thought of until towards the middle of the sixth century, when it was invented by *Dionysius Exiguus*, a *Scythian* by birth, but a *Roman* abbot, who flourished in the reign of *Justinian*. It did not, however, come into immediate use; for, according to Dr Hales, it was not sanctioned by any public acts or rescripts till the middle of the eighth century, when the first *German* synod, in the time of *Carolomannus*, duke of the Franks, was said to be assembled "*Anno ab incarnatione Domini 742, 11 Calendas Maii*. In the year 1431, it was ordered, by pope *Eugenius IV.* to be used in all public registers through the Christian world.

Dionysius placed the epoch of our Lord's incarnation and birth in the year of Rome 753, as *Panodorus* an *Egyptian* monk, who flourished under the emperor *Arcadius*, had likewise done before him; and they appear to have been led to this date of it by St Luke, who says that *John* the Baptist began his ministry "in the fifteenth year of the reign of *Tiberius Cæsar*," and that "Jesus, at his baptism, was beginning to be about thirty years of age." Now *Tiberius* succeeded *Augustus* at his death, August 19. U. C. 767, and therefore his fifteenth year was U. C. 782; from which subtracting U. C. 753, the assumed year of the nativity

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No sooner was this heavenly concert ended, but the overjoyed shepherds, remembering the signs which the angel, before he disappeared, had given them, immediately hastened to Bethlehem, where they found the virgin-mother, and Joseph the supposed father, attending the godlike babe, whom, in humble reverence, they adored, and then returned, praising and extolling the mercies of God, and, to the great amazement of all that heard them, publishing in all places what they knew concerning this child.

As soon as the child was eight days old, his parents had him circumcised † accord-

the remainder was 29 years complete, or 30 years current. But it is very far from being certain that St Luke dates the commencement of the reign of Tiberius from the death of Augustus; for there were different computations of the reigns of both these emperors then in circulation, though the time of Augustus's death is indisputably fixed by means of the great lunar eclipse, which happened, soon after it, September 27, U. C. 767. Why there were different accounts of the commencement of the reign of Tiberius, we learn from his contemporary *Velleius Paterculus*, as well as from the succeeding historians *Tacitus*, *Suetonius*, and *Dio Cassius*, who all agree, that Tiberius was admitted by Augustus "*colleague of the empire*"—in the administration of the imperial provinces (among which was Judea), and in "*the command of the armies*," two or three years before his death, either in U. C. 764, or more probably U. C. 765; and that this partnership was confirmed by a decree of the senate. Now it is probable—indeed almost certain—that St Luke computes the commencement of Tiberius's reign from that period; for otherwise his date of the baptism of our Lord, and the age which he assigns to him at that period, cannot be reconciled with St Matthew's account of the massacre at Bethlehem, which was ordered by Herod, and soon followed by the death of that tyrant himself.

The death of Herod is fixed beyond all controversy; for we collect from Josephus (*Antiq. lib. xvii. cap. 6—8. Bell. Jud. i. cap. 13, 4—8.*) that it happened between the lunar eclipse of March 13, U. C. 750, and the passover which fell that year on the 12th of April. That it happened likewise soon after the massacre at Bethlehem is equally certain; for we learn from *Macrobius* (*Saturnal. lib. ii. c. 4.*) that, at Rome, Herod's own son was supposed to be one of the infants murdered. This was indeed a mistake, but *Antipater* must have been slain about the same time, or there could have been no room for such a mistake; and we know certainly that Herod himself died just five days after he had ordered him to be put to death. As all the infants murdered in Bethlehem and its neighbourhood were from two years old and under, it follows from all these facts, that Jesus could not have been born earlier than U. C. 748, nor later than U. C. 749, as the wise men could not have, from the first appearance of the star, come in much less than a year from Parthia to Jerusalem. If we assume the latter year as the exact date of his birth, the two evangelists are at once reconciled; for the 15th year of Tiberius, reckoned from U. C. 765, when he began to reign in partnership with Augustus, would be U. C. 780; from which subtracting the year of Christ's nativity U. C. 749, the remainder, 31 years, more or

less, sufficiently agrees with the latitude of St Luke's, expression—"being about 30 years of age."

It appears therefore that Dionysius fell into an error when he dated our Lord's nativity in the year of Rome 753; but an additional error was soon fallen into by making the era, which he invented, commence January 1, U. C. 754; thus making it recede still farther from the true year of the nativity. Dr Hales, from whose valuable work the substance of this note is taken, having ascertained that year in the most scientific and satisfactory manner, has constructed on it a table of gospel chronology, from which the following dates are extracted. Some of them indeed anticipate the order of events in this narrative; but a view of them here will enable the reader to feel the force of the answer to part of our author's ensuing objection. Perhaps some readers may require to be told, that U. C. denote the building of Rome; B. C. before Christ according to the *vulgar era*; and A. D. the year of that era.

	U. C.	B. C.
John the Baptist's birth about the spring,		
The enrolment, in Herod's dominions decreed,		
The enrolment actually made by Cyrenius in summer,	749	8
Jesus Christ born in autumn, presented in the temple,		
Visit of the wise men, about February,		
Flight of the holy family,	750	4
Massacre at Bethlehem,		
Death of Herod in spring,		
Archelaus ethnarch of Judea,		
The assessment or " <i>taxing</i> ," for which the people were formerly enrolled, actually made By Cyrenius, then governor of Syria,	760	7
		A. D.

† Our Blessed Lord, as he was the supreme Law-giver of the world, was not, in strictness, bound to the observation of his own law, nor did he stand in any need of circumcision, considered as a remedy against original sin; because, in his incarnation, he had contracted no pollution; but, as he was "made of a woman, made under the law," and came (as himself testifies, *Matth. iii. 15.*) "to fulfil all righteousness," it became him to receive the character which distinguished the Jews from all other nations. Among the Jews, indeed, it was thought a reproach to keep company with persons that were not circumcised.

ing to the law ; when, pursuant to the order which the angel had given before his conception, they called his name **JESUS** ; and as soon as he was forty days old, two other ceremonies were performed, viz. the purification † of his mother, and the presentation of her first-born. Though therefore her son's immaculate conception needed not that ceremony, yet the Holy Virgin went up with Joseph to Jerusalem, there to offer the sacrifice †² prescribed by the law for her own purification, and there to present her son to the Lord, by delivering him into the priest's hands, and redeeming him again for five shekels. But, while she was in the temple performing this, old Simeon †³ (who had long waited for the redemption of Israel, and had been promised, by the mouth of heaven, that he should not leave this world before he had seen the illustrious person who was to effect it) came in, and taking the blessed infant in his arms, in an heavenly ecstasy

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"Thou wentest into men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them," is the accusation which they brought against St Peter, Acts xi. 3. ; and therefore, as our Lord was sent chiefly to the lost sheep of Israel, he could not have been qualified for their acceptance and free conversation, had he not submitted to this ordinance. Of him was that most glorious of all the promises made to Abraham intended, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," Gal. iii. 16. And therefore fit it was, that he should have the seal or testimony of circumcision, in order to shew that he was truly and rightly descended of that ancestor : And as he was come to be the Mediator of a new and better covenant, it was but decent, that the former should recede with honour, and that it might do so, himself should approve of a sacrament, which was both of Divine institution, and a means of admission into that former covenant. *Pool's Annotations*, and *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. i.

† The law concerning the purification of women we have in the 12th chapter of Leviticus, wherein it is ordained, that a woman, after bearing of children, should continue for a certain number of days in a state which the law termed unclean. For the seven first days, all conversation or contact polluted them that approached her, and for three and thirty days more, which in all amounted to forty, she was still, though in an inferior degree, reputed unclean ; but at the expiration of this term, if her child was a son (for the time was double for a daughter), she was commanded to bring a burnt-offering and a sin-offering, which wiped out the stain which the law laid upon her, and restored her to all the purity and privileges she had before. Now, though the miraculous conception of the Blessed Virgin set her quite above any obligation to the law of impurity, yet, since her being a mother was sufficiently notorious, though the manner of her being so was a secret, it was fit that she should submit, as the known mother of a son, to the ceremonies expected from her. Her sin-offering was not indeed due in any sense ; but she lay under the same legal incapacity, in the eye of the world, as other women did, and was to be restored to the temple by it. Her burnt-offering was not due, as that of other parents is, to commemorate a deliverance from pangs and danger ; but never, sure, were thanks so justly due for any son as this ; never from any mother as from her, who had the honour to bring forth her own

and the world's Saviour, the blessing and expectation of all the earth. As therefore he was circumcised in his own person, though the mystical and moral part of circumcision had nothing to do with him ; so his mother submitted to all the purifications of any other Israelitish woman, though she partook not in any degree of the infirmities and pollutions common to other births. *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. iv.

†³ What the Blessed Virgin offered, we read, was a pair of turtles, which being the oblation appointed only for the meaner sort of people, Lev. xii. 6, 8. discovers the poverty of Joseph and Mary, that they could not reach to a "lamb of the first year," the offering which they who had ability were obliged to make. *Whitby's Annotations*.

†³ Some are of opinion, that this Simeon was the son and successor of Hillel, a very famous doctor in the Jewish church before our Saviour's time, and that he was either the father or master of Gamaliel, at whose feet St Paul was educated. But (besides that, we can hardly suppose, how a person of this note could make so public a declaration in favour of our Lord, and yet no more notice be taken of it) if we look into the several revelations which God, at this time, was pleased to give of his Son, we shall find, that none of them were directed to any of the Pharisees, or principal doctors of the law, but that to Joseph a carpenter, to Zacharias an ordinary priest, and to a company of poor shepherds, such discoveries were made : And therefore, it is much more reasonable to presume, that this Simeon, to whom God had revealed the time of Christ's coming, was some honest plain man, more remarkable for his piety and devotion than any other quality or accomplishment. When he came into the temple, it is said, that among the other mothers, who brought their children to be "presented to the Lord," he observed the Holy Virgin all shining with rays of light, and that, putting the multitude aside, he went directly to her, gave her his blessing, took the child Jesus in his arms, and, being divinely inspired, pronounced the canticle, *Nunc dimittis*. *Nicephorus* relates, that as soon as he returned the child to his mother he died ; and *Epiphanius* adds, that the Hebrew priests refused to give him burial, because he had spoken of our Saviour with too much advantage. But these traditions may be groundless fictions. *Pool's Annotations*, *Calmet's Commentary* and *Dictionary*, under the word *Simeon*.

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praised God for the completion of his promises, in letting him live to see the Saviour of the world before he quitted it. And no sooner had he ended his divine rapture, but an ancient widow of the tribe of Aser, whose name was Anna, and whose piety and devotion, severity of life, and constant frequentation of the public worship, were very remarkable, coming into the temple, and being herself likewise excited by a prophetic spirit, gave God thanks for his infinite mercies; testifying, that this child was the true Messiah, and declaring the same to all such devout persons in Jerusalem as waited for his coming.

After these legal performances and solemn testimonies in favour of the child, Joseph and Mary returned to Bethlehem ||, where, in a very short time, they were visited by certain strangers, coming from afar, of a rank and character somewhat extraordinary. For God, to notify the birth of his Son to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews, caused an uncommon star to arise in the East, which some wise men or astronomers in those parts observing, and understanding withal that this was to signify the birth of the Messiah promised to the Jews, travelled to the metropolis of Judea, there enquiring after this new-born Prince, that they might testify their homage and adoration of him. Their public character and appearance, and their openly calling him the King of the Jews, put Herod † into a great consternation, and the whole city indeed into no small commotion, as both fearing and hoping something extraordinary.

Herod, however, being resolved to destroy this supposed rival in his kingdom, immediately assembled the whole body of the Sanhedrim, and demanded of them the very place where the Messiah should be born. Bethlehem, in the land assigned to the tribe of Judah, (they told him) was the very spot which the Holy Spirit, by the prophet Micah, had marked out for this great event; which when he understood he dismissed the assembly, and sending for the above-mentioned astronomers, with the utmost secrecy he enquired of them the exact time of the star's first appearance, and then dismissed them to Bethlehem, with orders to make diligent search for the young Prince, and, when they had discovered where he was, to bring him word to Jerusalem, that he, in like manner, might go and pay him his homage: but this pretence of worshipping was no more than a cloak to his intention of killing the child.

These persons, however, having received the king's instructions, †² departed towards

|| The words in St Luke are, "when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth," chap. ii. 39. which must be interpreted of some time at least after they had performed these things. For, upon supposition that the Magians came to Bethlehem, after that Joseph and Mary had been at Jerusalem with the child, upon the child's return from thence, his parents must have taken Bethlehem in their way, and there made some small stay (in which time we suppose that the wise men came), before they departed to the place of their settled abode: Because the other two suppositions, viz. That the wise men came to Bethlehem before the presentation of the child at Jerusalem, or, that they came not till he was in the second year of his age, when his parents, upon some business or other happened to be at Bethlehem, are attended with more difficulties than can easily be surmounted. Vid. *Spanheim's* Dub. Evang. part ii. Dub. 25, 26. [Whitby however reasons very cogently in support of the opinion, which, I believe, is the most common, that the wise men came to Bethlehem within forty days of our Lord's birth; but the arguments for the other opinion appear to me more

conclusive.]

† Herod, who was naturally of a jealous and suspicious temper, knew very well that himself was hated by the Jews, and that the Jews were then in full expectation of the Messiah (a Prince that was to subdue all other nations) to come and reign over them, and had therefore great reason to fear, that this rumour of a king's being born among them, confirmed by such extraordinary means, as persons coming from a far country, and conducted to Jerusalem by the guidance of a wonderful star, might be a means to excite sedition among the people, and occasion perhaps a revolution in the government. *Calmet's* Commentary.

†² Some upon this occasion are apt to wonder why none of the Jews should have the curiosity to attend the wise men in their journey to Bethlehem; and the reason that is commonly assigned for their omission in this respect is, the dread they might have of offending the tyrant under whom they lived: but as it is highly probable, that when the wise men came to Jerusalem, they made their immediate application to court, as the most likely place where to gain intelligence of him "that was born King of the Jews," and as it is much to be questioned, whether Herod,

Bethlehem, and in their way were very agreeably surprised with a new sight of the same miraculous star they had seen in their own country, which went before them, and (like the fiery pillar in the wilderness) directed them to the very house where Jesus and his mother abode. As soon as they entered in, they fell prostrate on the ground, according to the Eastern custom, and having in this manner adored the child, † presented him with the richest products of their country, gold and precious odours, more particularly frankincense and myrrh.

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Having thus performed their homage and congratulations, these Eastern strangers were thinking of nothing more than to return to Jerusalem, and acquaint Herod with the happy discovery they had made; but God, who knew the heart of that tyrant, prevented them by a vision that very night, which directed them into their own country another way; and, not long after, sent an angel to Joseph to acquaint him with Herod's intended cruelty against the child, and to order him to retire into Egypt with him and his mother, and there to continue till farther notice; which Joseph instantly obeyed, and, for fear of discovery, taking the advantage of the night, with all possible speed set forward for Egypt.

In the mean time Herod waited impatiently for the return of the eastern sages; but at length, finding himself deluded, and his most secret and subtle designs blasted, he fell into a most violent rage and fury; and having resolved to effect by cruelty what he had been disappointed of doing by policy, he sent out his soldiers, and † made a bloody massacre of all the children in the city of Bethlehem and the neighbouring

when he convened the doctors of the law, made any mention of the wise men's coming, but nakedly propounded the question to them, "where Christ was to be born?" so there is great reason to presume, that he sent them away so privately, that if any of the Jews had been courageous enough to have gone along with them, they possibly might not have had an opportunity. The greater wonder of the two, therefore, is, that Herod should send none in whom he could confide to be present at the discovery of this rival Prince, and to bring him word thereof, if not dispatch him; but in this the protection and Providence of God was visible. *Pool's Annotations.*

† Some of the ancients are of opinion, that, in the presents which these Eastern sages made, they had a mystical meaning, and designed to signify their acknowledgment both of the divinity, royalty, and humanity of our Blessed Saviour: for the incense, say they, was proper to be given him as a God; the gold, as a king; and the myrrh, as a mortal man, whose body was to be embalmed therewith. But all this is no more than the sport of a luxuriant fancy. It is certain, that the Eastern people never came into the presence of their princes without some presents, and that their presents were usually of the most choice things that their country did afford. All that they meant therefore was to do homage to a new-born prince of a neighbouring nation in the best manner they could; and if, (what naturalists tell us be true) viz. that myrrh was only to be found in Arabia, and frankincense in Sabæa, which is a part of Arabia; and that this country was not destitute of gold, 2 Chron. ix. 14. and at the same time was famous for men conversant in astronomy; this makes a very probable argument that the wise men came from thence. But of this we shall see more hereafter. *Pool's Annotations.* [I think it likewise probable, that the wise

men were inwardly directed by the Spirit of God to make such offerings to the new-born Saviour, as might enable Joseph and Mary, who appear to have been very poor, to travel with him into Egypt.]

† It is thought strange by some, that Josephus, who writes the life of Herod, in most of its circumstances, should make no manner of mention of the murder of these innocents: but, when it is considered that Josephus was only born in the first year of Caligula, and the thirty-seventh of Christ; that he wrote his History of the Jewish Wars (which he extracted from public records) in the fifty-sixth year of his age; and that it can scarce be supposed, an action so inglorious to the memory of Herod as this massacre was, should be preserved in the Jewish records; it is not so very wonderful, that he, who wrote above ninety-three years after the fact was committed, should make no mention of it: Nor is it very material that he did not, since we find Macrobius, an heathen author, about the latter end of the fourth age, not forgetting to acquaint us, that "Herod the king ordered to be slain in Syria (which in Roman authors is frequently set for Judea) some children that were under two years old," though he is mistaken in the circumstances of the story, when he makes Herod's own son to be one of them. *Saturn, lib. ii. c. 4.*

[The massacre of the infants is mentioned likewise in a Rabbinical work, called *Toldeth Jeshu*, in the following words: "And the king gave orders for putting to death every infant to be found in Bethlehem; and the king's messengers killed every infant according to the royal order." Cedranus too says, Herod was distinguished by the title of παιδοκτόνος—the child-murderer; but Cedranus flourished in the eleventh century, and is, besides, a writer of no great authority. *Hales's Analysis, &c. vol. 3. p. 716.*

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towns, that were || two years of age and under, including herein the whole time and more that the wise-men had told him, and not doubting but that, in this general slaughter, he should dispatch the young Prince whom he so much dreaded : But God had provided him with a safe retreat. The shrieks, however, of tender mothers for their innocent babes, and the groans of expiring infants, which, on this occasion, filled the skies, were inexpressible, and were one reason, doubtless, why the divine vengeance not long after overtook this tyrant, and * smote him with a strange and terrible distemper, which put an end to his wicked and brutal life.

(a) Before his death, he had, by will, (which in some measure Augustus confirmed) settled his dominions upon his sons and his sister. Archelaus he had made his successor in that part of his kingdom which included Judea, Idumæa, and Samaria : To Philip he had given Aulonitis, Trachonitis, Panea, and Batanea : To Herod Antipas, Galilee and Peræa ; and to his sister Salome, some particular cities with a considerable sum of money. After his death therefore, (which was notified to Joseph by a vision) God ordered him to return, with the child and his mother, into the land of Israel, which Joseph readily obeyed ; but when he arrived in Judea, hearing that Archelaus succeeded Herod in that part of the country, and being apprehensive that the cruelty and am-

|| Some will needs infer from hence, that this dreadful massacre was not committed until our Lord was almost two years old, because they were children of that age, and under, whom Herod ordered to be slain : but besides that the word *δυσῆς* may signify one who has lived one year only, and so the words *ἀπὸ δυοῦς καὶ κατωτέρω* may be translated "from a year old and under;" Herod might possibly think, that the star did not appear till some considerable time after the young King's birth, and so (to make sure work) might be induced to slay all born at Bethlehem a year before, and more, even to the star's appearing : for he who had the heart to slay three of his own sons would hardly be sparing of the blood of other people's children. *Whitby's Annotations.*

* The disease of which he died, and the misery which he suffered under it, plainly shewed that the hand of God was then in a signal manner upon him. For, not long after the murder of the infants at Bethlehem, his distemper, as Josephus informs us, daily increased, after an unheard-of manner, and he himself laboured under the most loathsome and tormenting accidents that can be imagined. "He had a lingering and wasting fever, and grievous ulcers in his entrails and bowels ; a violent cholick, an insatiable appetite, venemous swelling in his feet, convulsions in his nerves, a perpetual asthma and stinking breath, rottenness in his joints and privy members, accompanied with prodigious itchings, crawling worms, and intolerable smells, so that he was a perfect hospital of incurable diseases." And thus he died in horrid pain and torment, being smitten by God for his many enormous iniquities. For, setting aside some appearances of generosity and greatness, there was never a more complete tyrant than he. He suppressed and changed the high priest's office as he thought fit, and even profaned the temple itself. He slew the legal king of the Jews, extirpated all the race of the Maccabees, destroyed the whole Sanhedrim, and substituted others in their room : Nor was his rage confined to the Jews, but descended to his own family and near-

est relations, even to the executing his beloved wife Mariamne, and his own sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, upon slight and trivial occasions. So wicked a prince as he was conscious he had been, could not (he knew) occasion any true lamentation at his death, but rather a great deal of gladness and rejoicing all the kingdom over ; and therefore, to prevent this, he framed a project, which was one of the most horrid that ever entered into the mind of man. All the nobility and most considerable men in every city, town, and village in Judea, upon pain of death, he summoned to come together to Jericho, where he was then lying sick ; and when they were come, commanded his soldiers to shut them all up in a spacious place called *the Hippodrome*, when having called his sister Salome, and her husband Alexas, with some choice friends, he told them with tears, "That he was sensible of the Jews hatred to his government and person, and that his death would be an high satisfaction to them ; that his friends therefore ought to procure him some solace in the midst of his bitter anguish, which if they performed according to his order, the mournings and lamentations at his death would be as great and magnificent as ever any prince had ; and this order was, that on the same hour when he expired, the soldiers should surround the Hippodrome, and put all the enclosed persons to the sword, and then publish his death, which (as he said) would cause his exit to be doubly triumphant ; first, for the posthumous execution of his commands ; and, secondly, for the quality and number of his mourners." But Salome and Alexas not being wicked enough to do what they had been made solemnly to promise, chose rather to break their obligation than make themselves the executioners of so bloody a design ; and therefore as soon as Herod was dead, they opened the Hippodrome, and permitted all that were shut up in it to return to their respective homes. *Josephus de Bello Jud. lib. i. c. 18. Priededux's Connection, part ii. and Euchar'd's Ecclesiastical History, lib. i.*

(a) *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvii. c. 8.*

bition of the father might be entailed upon the son, he feared to settle there ; and therefore, being directed by God in another vision, he retired into the dominions * of his brother Herod Antipas, in Galilee, to his former habitation in Nazareth, where the strange occurrences of our Lord's birth were not so well known. † After this we have no certain account either of him or his parents, only that they annually repaired with him to Jerusalem at the passover; and that as his body increased in stature, so || more especially the faculties of his soul were enlarged, being highly replenished with wisdom and the grace of God.

In the mean time (a) Archelaus, following the steps of his father, made himself so odious to the Jews, that the principal men among them, joining with those of Samaria, made a public complaint of him to Augustus ; who, upon a full hearing both of his crimes and vindication, deprived him of his government, confiscated all his goods, banished him to Vienna, a city in Gaul, and reduced his dominions to the form of a Roman province, which for ever after was ruled by a governor sent from Rome, who was called by the name of Procurator, but in some cases was subject to the president or governor of Syria.

When Palestine was reduced to this state, and our Blessed Saviour now advanced to the twelfth year of his age ‡, he went up with his parents (according as their custom

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

Ann. Dom.
12, &c.
Ær. Vulg.
8. &c. or 7.

* This Antipas his father Herod had once appointed to be his successor in his kingdom, but afterwards expunged him out of his will, and only made him tetrarch ; but not long after his brother's accession to the throne, he went to Rome, with a purpose to dispute the kingdom with him, on pretence that his father's former will, by which he was constituted king, ought to take place before the latter, which was made when his understanding was not so perfect. Both the brothers procured able orators to set forth their pretensions before the emperor ; but the emperor nevertheless refused to decide any thing concerning their affair, nor did he at length give Archelaus the title of a king, but only of an ethnarch, with one moiety of the territories which his father enjoyed ; but these, in a few years after, he by his ill conduct forfeited. Of all the sons of Herod indeed, this Archelaus is said to have been of the most fierce and bloody temper. At his first accession to the government, (under the pretence of a mutiny) he had killed near three thousand of his subjects ; and therefore Joseph hearing of this, might well dread to go and settle in any part of his dominions ; but as Antipas was a man of a more mild disposition, and the birth of Jesus not made so public in Galilee and at Nazareth as it was at Bethlehem, and even at Jerusalem, by the coming of the wise men, and what happened at the purification of the Blessed Virgin, it was thought more advisable to retreat into this village than to set up his abode in any populous city. *Pool's* Annotations.

† N. B. That the vulgar Christian era, according to Dionysius Exiguus, which commences four years after the true time of Christ's birth, may begin to be computed much about this time, viz. from the beginning of the fourth year of Archelaus's, and thirty-first of Augustus's reign, computing from his victory over Anthony and Cleopatra.

|| The words in the text are, "Jesus increased in wisdom, and in stature, and in favour with God and

man," Luke ii. 52. But if it be asked how he, who was the Eternal Wisdom of the Father, could be improved in any quality of his mind ? the answer is, that all things in Scripture, which are spoken of Christ, are not spoken with respect to his entire person, but only with respect to one or other of the natures that are united in that person. His divine nature was infinite, and consequently capable of no improvements, but his human was : and therefore, though the divine *λογος* was united to the human soul by his conception, yet might the divine nature communicate its powers to the human by distinct and gradual illuminations ; and accordingly we may observe, that all public manifestation of it to the world seems to have been industriously declined, until ripeness of years and judgment had carried him up to the perfections of a man. So little reason have we to suppose that he, who condescended to be like us in body, should think it below him to be so too in that other no less essential, but much more noble part of us, our soul, without which it was impossible for him to be a man ; so little reason to imagine that the Divine essence in him supplied the place and offices of intellectual faculties. *Whitby's* Annotations, and *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. ii.

(a) *Jewish Antiq.* lib. 17. c. 12. et de Bello, Jud. lib. ii. c. 2.

‡ It is commonly observed by those that are learned in the customs and institutions of the Jewish church, that until a child was of twelve years old, he was not obliged to go to Jerusalem at the time of the Passover ; and that though their youth were usually thirteen before they were brought before the masters of the synagogue to give an account of their proficiency in religion, (which answers in a great measure to the Christian rite of confirmation) yet since the season then appointed was accommodated to the capacities and attainments of children in general, without forbidding those of qualifications extraordinary, and whose genius (in the Jewish phrase) did run be-

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was) to Jerusalem at the time of the passover. His parents, after a stay of the whole seven days, having performed the usual ceremonies of the feast, were now returning with great numbers of their neighbours and acquaintance towards Galilee; and never doubting but that Jesus had joined himself with some of the company, they travelled on patiently for a whole day's journey; but when night came on, and among their relations and particular friends they could hear no tidings of him, it is not easy to imagine the greatness of their fears and || apprehensions, which made them return to Jerusalem with the utmost speed, to make all possible enquiry for him.

† At the end of three days they found him in one of the rooms of the temple, (probably in that of the grand Sanhedrim), sitting among the learned doctors and masters of Israel, hearing them discourse, and propounding such questions to them as raised the admiration of all that heard him, and made them astonished at the ripeness of his understanding. Nor were his parents less surprised to find him in that place; but when his mother told him with what impatience they had sought him, and in some measure blamed him for putting them in such a fright, the excuse which he made for himself was, "Know ye not, that I must be employed in my Father's house?" words which, though she at that time did not rightly understand, she took care nevertheless for ever after to register in her mind!

Being thus happily found by his parents he returned with them to Nazareth, and there living in all dutiful subjection to them, wrought (very probably) with his reputed father in the trade of a carpenter; and after his father's death (which is supposed to have happened about a year before the preaching of John the Baptist) (a) still continued in the same occupation, As indeed we can scarce help inferring, from the rude treatment of the Nazarenes his townsmen, as also from the total silence of the evangelists, as to the intermediate actions of his life †², that though he "grew in favour with

fore the commandment, to appear sooner, our Saviour might offer himself to his examination a year before the common time: And this is the best reason that can be assigned for his staying behind his parents, when he could not but know that they were departed from Jerusalem without him, and for his being found in one of the rooms adjoining to the temple, where the doctors of the law used to meet, not only to resolve the questions that were brought before them, but to examine likewise and confirm such of the youth as they found to be qualified for that ceremony, which (according to the same authors) was usually performed by devout prayers and solemn benedictions. *Grotius* in Luke ii. 45. *Beausobre's* and *Pool's* Annotations, and *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. ii.

|| It may seem a little strange, perhaps, that Mary and Joseph, who had been sufficiently instructed, one would think, in the great article of Christ's divinity, and therefore must certainly know, that as "he was the power and wisdom of God," he could neither fall into any danger nor come to any harm, should so mightily afflict themselves when they came to miss him. The reason which *Origen* (*Hom. i. 9. in Luc.*) seems to assign is, not that his parents supposed that he was lost or come to any mischance, but were apprehensive that he had withdrawn himself to some other place, and was possibly gone up to heaven, there to continue until his eternal Father should think proper to send him down again: But the most easy and natural solution is, that, without ever considering

his Divinity and Omnipotence, they suffered themselves to be carried away by their natural tenderness, and could not, without great concern, see themselves deprived of his company, uncertain of what had befallen him, or for what possible reason he should absent himself from theirs. It must not be denied however, that though something may be allowed to a parent's fondness, yet it does not appear from their whole conduct, and especially from Mary's complaint and our Saviour's reply, ver. 48, 49. that they had, as yet, a clear and perfect knowledge of his Divine nature in union with the human; and therefore the Evangelist has remarked upon them, "that they understood not the saying which he spake unto them," ver. 50. *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Pool's* Annotations.

† The words in the text are, "after three days they found him;" but we need not from thence infer, that they were three days a-seeking him, but rather, that it was three days from the time they set out from Jerusalem; going on their journey the first day; returning to Jerusalem the second; and finding him in the temple on the third: for since they found him in the temple, which in all probability was the first place they sought for him in, we can hardly imagine that they should be three days in Jerusalem before they found him. *Pool's* Annotations.

(a) Mark vi. 3.

†² It may be possibly made a question, why the evangelists have given us no account of our Saviour's life, from the twelfth year of his age till he began his

God and man," yet (considering his excellencies) he lived in a very obscure manner, and till the time of his manifestation to Israel, shewed no miraculous marks to distinguish him from the rest of mankind.

From the beginning of the Gospels to
Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

(a) In the eighteenth year of our Saviour's life died Augustus Cæsar at Nola in Campania, (after a reign of near forty-four years), to the inexpressible grief of all his subjects, and was succeeded by Tiberius, the son of his wife Livia by a former husband, but a prince of a quite contrary disposition to his predecessor. In the second year of his accession to the empire he recalled Rufus from the government of Judea, and sent Valerius Gratus (who was the fourth governor in these parts since the banishment of Archelaus) to succeed him. (b) Gratus, having continued in Judea about eleven years, was at length recalled, and Pontius Pilate (a person too like his master Tiberius, of a fierce and irreconcilable spirit, and of a *cruel and covetous disposition) was sent governor in his place. In the first year of his coming (which was the fifteenth year of Tiberius, from the time that he was admitted to reign in copartnership with Augustus, *2 John the Baptist began to open his commission for the preparation of

ministry, which (according to the vulgar era) was about the thirtieth; because if, in this intermediate space, he did any thing worthy of remembrance, it ought in all reason to have been recorded. But when it is considered, that the end of the secret penmen was not so much to gratify our curiosity as to consult our profit, we cannot but admire the great wisdom of God, (by whose inspiration they wrote) in passing by the less active parts of our Lord's life, which would certainly have swelled their gospels to immensurable volumes, fit for the perusal of none but the studious, and such as had plenty of time at their command; whereas now, taking the four gospels together, they make but a small book, and separately, no more than little manuals that may be carried about with us wherever we go; may be soon read over, and easily remembered, even by men of mean capacities and no great leisure: and yet they contain all the transactions of our Saviour's life which chiefly concern us to know; I mean such as relate to his mediatorial office, as that he came into the world to teach us, to die, and to rise again for us; to instruct us by his heavenly doctrine, as our prophet; to offer himself a sacrifice on the cross, as our priest; and to loose the bands of death, and ascend triumphant into heaven, as our king. "Illa ergo tempora," says the learned Spanhemius, "notata, quæ nobis impensæ, quæ in munere transmissa, quæ ad ἀσφάλειαν fidei nostræ sufficere visa, quæ Christum exhibent, vel in cathedrâ, vel in cruce, vel in throno. Sic etenim ostensum, illa tantum nobis quærenda et vestiganda esse in Messia, quæ actus officii tum prophetici, tum sacerdotalis, tum regii, cujus causa venit, concernunt." For there are also many other things, says the evangelist, that Jesus did which are not written in this book; but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have life through his name, John xxi. 25. and xx. 31. *Spanheim's* Dub. Evan. part ii. Dub. 96.

(a) *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 3. and Dion.*

(b) *Ibid.*

* Josephus has given us several instances of Pilate's great cruelty in the course of his government,

viz. that he caused the Roman soldiers to fall upon a great number of Galileans, (very likely the followers of Judas Gaulonites) and to slaughter them like so many sheep in the temple, and on the very day appointed for the killing of the passover, and so "mingled their blood with their sacrifices," Luke xiii. 1. That when the people clamoured against his taking some of the sacred money out of the temple, he ordered the soldiers, upon a signal given, to fall upon them with large batons, so that many died of the blows which they received, and many were trodden to death in the throng: and that the Samaritans, as well as the Jews, felt the severity of his administration, when he destroyed great numbers of them near Tirathaba, and of those whom he took, that were of any interest or quality among them, struck off their heads. *Josephus de Bello Jud. lib. ii. c. 8. and Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 5.*

** How John passed the former part of his life the Scripture is silent, but there is an ancient tradition in the church, that Elizabeth, hearing of the sad havock which Herod's barbarity had made among the infants in Bethlehem, fled into the wilderness to secure her child from the tyrant's rage, and there attended him with all the care and tenderness of an affectionate mother: that the child was about eighteen months old when his mother thus fled with him, but after forty days she died, and his father Zachariah, at the next time of his ministration, was, by the command of Herod, (because he would not discover the place of his son's concealment) put to death: that in this destitution of natural parents, God sent an angel to be his nourisher and guardian, (as he had formerly done to Elijah when he fled from the rage of Ahab) until he came of strength to provide for himself, and that then he lived in the manner that the evangelists have described. When he began his preaching it is not so well agreed. Lightfoot, and some others who believe that our Saviour was born in September, and that John was now beginning to be thirty years of age, are of opinion, that he began his ministry about the passover; but Usher and his followers do, with more probability, suppose that his preaching began

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our Saviour's way before him, † by preaching "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."

He had been †² bred up in the wilderness, and lived an austere life. * Locusts and wild honey, such as nature produce in these desert places, was the chief diet he lived upon, and a †³ loose coat made of camel's hair, and fastened with a leathern girdle,

upon the tenth day of the seventh month, (which answers to our nineteenth day of October) five days before the feast of tabernacles, upon the great day of expiation, when the high priest entered the holy of holies, and when so solemn a fast was enjoined, that whosoever did not afflict his soul at that time was to be cut off from the people. *Howell's History*, and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *John*.

† The meaning of this phrase is, that John preached repentance, Matth. iii. 2. and baptized those that were penitent, in token of the remission of their sins, even as they on their parts received baptism in testimony of the sincerity of their repentance. Now baptism, we know, was no new or strange thing among the Jews. It was acknowledged and practised as an emblem of purification from past guilt, and a rite of entering solemnly into covenant with God. The expositors of their law agree, that this ceremony passed upon the whole congregation of Israel just before the law was given at Mount Sinai; that their custom, in all succeeding ages, has been to receive their heathen proselytes by baptism, as well as by sacrifice and circumcision. In conformity to this, therefore, John both administered and exhorted his followers to his ordinance of baptism, as an evidence of their penitence for past sins, and profession of better obedience for the future: but then, as faith is a qualification for baptism as well as repentance, he propounded our Lord for the object of faith to all who received this ordinance at his hands; "for John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe in him, who should come after him," i. e. on Christ Jesus, Acts xix. 4. It is a great mistake therefore in some to suppose that the baptism of John was, in substance, the same with what Christ did afterwards institute: For John neither did nor could baptize his disciples in the name of the Holy Ghost, as the apostles did, because "the Holy Ghost was not yet given," John vii. 39. He did not baptize them in the name of Christ; for had he done so there had been no occasion for the question, "Whether he himself were the Christ or not?" Luke iii. 15. Herein therefore lay the imperfection of John's baptism, that though it prepared men to be Christians, yet it did not make them so; and therefore we find St Paul baptizing again some disciples at Ephesus, (who had before received the baptism of John), in order to fit them for the reception of the Holy Ghost, Acts xix. 5, 6. *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. iv.

†² A wilderness among the Jews did not signify a place wholly void of inhabitants, but a place that was more mountainous, less fruitful, less peopled, and where the habitations were more dispersed than in other parts of the country. For as it is incongruous

to suppose that the Baptist should preach the doctrine of repentance to stocks, and stones, and wild beasts, the wilderness here must be understood in a comparative sense; and consequently the wilderness of Judea, where he preached and baptised, must be that tract of land which lay on each side of the river Jordan, on the confines of Enon and Salim. *Whitby's Annotations*; *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, and *Spanheim's Dübä Evang.* part ii. Dub. 97.

* There is no reason for running into criticisms, what the common diet of the Baptist was, whether fowl, or fish, or herbs, or wild pease, (for the word ἀγρίδες has been made to signify all these) since the thing is notorious, that locusts (in the most obvious sense of the word) were creatures which the Levitical law looked upon as clean, and allowed the Jews to eat, Lev. xi. 22. That they were a common food, as the ancients affirm, (Pliny, lib. xvii. c. 3. and Strabo, lib. xvi.) in Afric, Persia, Syria, and even Palestine itself; that, according to the account of some modern authors, in some places they are brought in waggom-loads, and sold in the market for the common people to feed on; and that they are frequently seen upon the banks of the river Jordan, of the same form, but much larger, than ours; and being either fried in oil or dried in the sun, are accounted a good sort of food. As little reason is there for men to puzzle themselves about what this μέλι ἀγρίου, or *wild honey* means, since every one knows that Judea was so famed for plenty of honey, that in several places of Scripture it is said to flow with honey; and from the instances of Sampson, Judges xiv. 8. and Jonathan, 1 Sam. xiv. 25. it must be concluded that wild honey, such as either distilled from the boughs like dew, or was found in the cliffs of rocks or hollow trunks of trees, was no uncommon thing in that country. But though these locusts and wild honey may very properly be taken in their natural and most obvious sense, yet it must not therefore be thought that John never ate any thing else, but that for the generality he made use of such slender diet, and contented himself with what the desert place which he chose for his habitation could afford him. *Spanheim's Dübä Evang.* part ii. Dub. 98. [See likewise *Burder's Oriental Customs*, vol. i. nos. 371. 425.]

†³ We are told by some authors, that the hair of camels about the Caspian Sea was formerly the softest in the world, of which was made a very fine stuff; and that in the empire of the great Cham of Tartary, in the city of Calacia, the metropolis of the province of Tangouth, there is a kind of cloth which the inhabitants call zambelotte, (the same no doubt with what we call camelot), made of wool and camels hair, perfectly good, and as fine as any cloth whatever. But there is reason good to think that John's habit was far from being of this kind, because it would not so

the only garb he then wore ; and therefore no person was so proper to inculcate the doctrines of repentance and reformation as he who, by his free and resolute preaching, joined with this great severity of life, soon procured a vast auditory and numerous proselytes of all ranks and qualities from Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region about Jordan, confessing their sins before God, and entering into this new institution by baptism.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

Among the great multitudes that came to his preaching and baptism, there were Pharisees †, and Sadducees not a few, whose confidence and immorality he sharply reprov'd ; while, at the same time, he exhorted the common people to works of extensive charity ; the publicans †², to avoid oppression and injustice ; the soldiers, to abstain from plunder and violence ; and every one, in short, to beware of those crimes to which their employments and manner of life did most expose them.

These solemn admonitions, pronounced with so much weight and authority, procured him a mighty veneration among the people, insomuch, that several began to look upon him as the promised and now expected Messiah ; but to remove all thoughts of this kind, he freely declared, “ that he only baptized them with water to repentance and a new life ; but that there was one coming, and ready to appear among them, who would baptize them with the effusion of the Holy Ghost, and who so far exceeded him in power and excellency, that he was not worthy to do for him the meanest or most servile office.” These were the doctrines which John preached, and this the testimony which he gave of Jesus, even before he had the happiness to know him.

After John had continued in his ministry for several months, our Lord thought fit to remove from his private retirement at Nazareth, and taking leave of his mother and

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well suit with the condition of a man living in a wilderness, to whom our Saviour opposes those that are clothed in soft raiment ; would not so well agree with the evangelist's design of setting forth the Baptist's austerity in his habit as well as his diet ; nor comport so well with the description of Elias, whom he came to represent, “ an hairy man, and one girt with a girdle of leather about his loins,” 2 Kings i. 8. Though therefore we may not infer from the expression that the Baptist's habit was mere sackcloth (as some would have it), yet we cannot but conclude from thence that it was plain and coarse, such as became the place where he lived, (where camels we are told were in great plenty), and a prophet and preacher of righteousness to wear. For so in the poem, written by Paulinus, it is described,

Vestis erat curvi sætis conserta cameli,

Contra luxuriam molles duraret ut artus,

Arceretque graves compuncto corpore somnos.

Ælian's History, c. 24. *Hammond's Annotations*, and *Spanheim's Evang.* part ii. Dub. 98.

† We have already, in a separate Dissertation, given a particular account of the rise and principles of the several sects among the Jews, and need only take notice here, that the Pharisees are thought to take their name from the word *parash*, which signifies *separation*, because they were separated from all others in their extraordinary pretences to sanctity, and some particular observances ; and that the Sadducees (who were directly opposite to the Pharisees both in temper and principles) derived their name, either from Sadock, who lived near 300 years before our Saviour's birth, and is supposed to be the founder of the sect,

or (as some think) from *sedeck*, which signifies *justice*, because they pretended to be the only exact distributors of justice, and were very rigid indeed in the execution of it. *Eachard's Ecclesiastical History* in the Introduction.

†² The Publicans were persons of no particular sect, nor of any religious function among the Jews, but certain public officers whom the Romans employ'd to collect their tributes, tolls, and imposts. This office was once of great account among the Romans, and conferred upon none less than the equestrian order ; but when it came to fall into the hands of the Jews, who farm'd it of the Romans, it soon became base and infamous, and more especially odious to the Jews upon these two accounts : 1st, Because these tributes were looked upon as a standing instance of their slavery, which they, who made such boasts of their being a free-born people, and invested in that privilege by God himself, could least of all endure. And, 2dly, Because these publicans, having farm'd the customs of the Romans at high rates, did generally make use of all methods of extortion and oppression, to enable them both to pay their rents and to raise some advantage to themselves. Upon these accounts the publicans, as conspiring with the Romans both to impoverish and enslave their countrymen, became so universally abhorred by the Jewish nation, that they held it unlawful to do them any act of common courtesy, nay, even to eat or to drink with them, for which we find them so frequently blaming our Saviour. *Eachard's Ecclesiastical History* in the Introduction, page 27.

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his trade, passed over into Judea, to Bethabara †, on the banks of the river Jordan, where John was then baptizing.

He, who was innocence and purity itself, had certainly no need of the baptism of repentance, but being minded to honour and sanctify the institution †², he offered himself to John; and when John, inspired with a prophetic spirit †³, knew him, and thereupon endeavoured to decline the office, he gave him such reasons for the expediency of the thing, as made him no longer hesitate, but immediately baptize him. Jesus †⁴ was no sooner got out of the water, but as he was making his addresses to heaven, the sky on a sudden was divided by a great radiancy †⁵, and the Holy Ghost (in the manner of a

† *Bethabara* does, in the Hebrew language, signify as much as a *place of passage*; and therefore, whereas we read, Josh. ii. 7. 23. that there was a fording-place over Jordan not far from Jericho, and again, Josh. iii. 16. that the people passed over-right against Jericho, it is probably conjectured, that hereabouts stood Bethabara, and was the place of reception and entertainment for passengers out of Judea into *Pæra*, or the country beyond Jordan; nay, it is imagined by some, that, in the very same place of the river where the ark stood, while the Israelites passed over, our Blessed Saviour (the ark of the covenant of grace) was baptized by John the Baptist. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*.

†² There are some other reasons which might induce our Lord to come to John's Baptism besides what himself alleges, viz. the performance of all righteousness, or whatever had a tendency to the people's edification; as that he might authorise this baptism of John by his public approbation; that by this rite he might be initiated to his prophetic office, and consecrated to the service of God; that hereby he might abolish the ceremony of the Jewish baptism, and more effectually recommend that of his own institution; to which this of the Baptist was an introduction; and more especially, that, in the presence of the Baptist, and all the company that had resorted to him, he might obtain the testimony of the Holy Ghost, and of his heavenly Father, to confirm John in the belief of his being the promised Messiah, and to induce the people, as soon as he began his ministry, to follow and attend to him. *Calnet's Commentary*.

†³ The words in the text are these, "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him, but John forbid him," Matth. iii. 13, 14. but how could John forbid him, when he says of himself, "I knew him not, but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost," John i. 33. Now to this it may be answered, that since one part of John's ministry was "to bear witness of that light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," it was highly necessary that our Saviour should be unknown to him in person, before he came to his baptism, that the world might have no suspicion of any collusion, or that the Baptist testified of him by compact. Though therefore he had never seen the face of our Saviour, because they were bred up in different countries, yet, by a particular revelation, he knew that he was already

come into the world, and was shortly to baptize with the Holy Ghost; and therefore, when our Saviour came and presented himself to be baptized, he had immediately another revelation, that this was the great person of whom he had been told before; even as Samuel, having been told by God, that "on the morrow a man should come to him to be the captain over his people Israel," 1 Sam. ix. 16. upon Saul's appearing, had another inspiration, resembling the Baptist's here, "Behold the man of whom I spake to thee," ver. 17. *Whitby's Annotations*.

†⁴ The observation of the Greek church, in relation to this matter, is this, that he who ascended out of the water must first descend down into it; and, consequently, "that baptism is to be performed not by sprinkling, but by washing the body." And indeed, he must be strangely ignorant of the Jewish rites of baptism, who seems to doubt of this, since, to the due performance of it, they required the immersion of the whole body to such a degree of nicety, that if any dirt was upon it, that hindered the water from coming to that part, they thought the ceremony not rightly done. The Christians no doubt took this rite from the Jews, and followed them in their manner of performing it. Accordingly, several authors have shewn, that we read nowhere in Scripture of any one's being baptized but by immersion, and, from the acts of councils and ancient rituals, have proved, that this manner of immersion continued (as much as possible) to be used for thirteen hundred years after Christ. But it is much to be questioned, whether the prevalence of custom, and the over fondness of parents, will, in these cold climates especially, ever suffer it to be restored. *Whitby's Annotations*. [There seems indeed to be no necessity for doing so. When Paul and Silas, in the middle of the night, baptized the jailor and his household in the common prison, (Acts xv. 33.) there is no reason to suppose that they had water sufficient for the purpose of baptizing the converts by immersion. It is as little likely that three thousand people could, in the midst of Jerusalem, be in one day baptized by immersion (Acts ii. 41.); for though this might have been done in the brook Kedron, is it supposable that the chief priests and rulers of the Jews would have permitted so great a multitude to go quietly out of the city for such a purpose?]

†⁵ The words in St Matthew are,—“Lo, the heavens were opened;” in St Mark, cloven or rent. The common people of the Jews indeed were of opinion, that the heavens were firm and solid, and that the fire, which fell from thence upon the face of the

† dove) descended upon his sacred head, with an audible voice from heaven, wherein God declared him his “Beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased.”

Our Blessed Lord being thus by baptism, and the unction of the Holy Ghost, prepared for his prophetic office, was, by the impulse of the Divine Spirit, carried farther into the wilderness of Judea; where, after he had fasted forty days and forty nights †² (as Moses did on Mount Sinai), and was now very hungry, the devil †³ assumed a bodily shape, and set upon him with a threefold temptation. 1st, From his hunger he took occasion to tempt him to despair, and distrust of his Father’s care of him, who had abandoned him in that condition; and therefore persuading him that he was not the Son of God, he put him upon the experiment of his being such by “making the stones become bread:” But our Saviour soon answered him by a (a) passage out of the Scripture, intimating, that “God, when he pleased, could employ means extraordinary for the support and nourishment of men.” 2dly, His next essay was, to try how far pride and presumption would affect him; and therefore, carrying him through the air, and setting him upon the †⁴ highest part of the temple, he put him upon the proof of his being the Son of God, by throwing himself off from thence, and flying in the air, alleging a text out of the Psalmist (b) to encourage him: But Jesus as soon answered him by another text, commanding men (c) “not to tempt God,” or depend upon his Providence for their conservation, in dangers of their own seeking. 3dly, His last experiment was to tempt him with the charms of ambition; and therefore, transporting him again through the

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earth, burst through this firmament, and made an opening in this vast convex that surrounds us: And therefore it is, that the evangelists express themselves in this manner, in accommodation to the prejudices and capacities of the vulgar. But by the phrase we need understand no more, than that a sudden beam of radiant light came darting from the skies (like a flash of lightning from the clouds), and made it seem as though the heavens had been opened or rent to let it out; because, to the naked eye, the air at that time seems to divide, to make a clearer and fuller way for the light. *Calmet’s Commentary*, and *Pool’s Annotations*.

† The ancients were generally of opinion, that the Holy Ghost, in his descent upon our Saviour, assumed the real shape of a dove, which, at that time more especially, was a very proper representation of his dove-like nature, Isaiah xlii. 2. and of all such as were to receive the same spirit, and are required to be as harmless as doves; but most of the moderns (though they allow, that the Blessed Spirit did, at this time, assume a visible shape, to render his descent manifest) do maintain, that the *ὡς περιστερὰ* relates not to the body or shape of a dove, but to the manner of a dove’s descending and lighting on any thing; and thence they infer, that it was this body of light which issued from the skies that came down upon Christ, and, while he was praying, hung hovering over his head, just after the manner and motion of a dove before it settles upon any thing. Whether of these opinions should prevail, it is idle to dispute, since neither of them are destitute of some countenance from Scripture, neither of them injurious to the dignity of the Holy Ghost. *Calmet’s Commentary*, and *Hammond’s Annotations*.

†² Whoever considers the frailty of human nature, cannot but allow, that so great and so long an abstinence, without any sense of hunger (for the evange-

list tells us that our Saviour was only hungry afterwards), must be altogether miraculous, and so no duty to us; and, if he reflects withal, that the end of his fast was not to chastise or subdue that body, which was never irregular (as the design of all our fasting is), he must allow, that our Saviour, in this particular, set no precedent to us, and therefore it is cruelty, or a superstitious folly at least, in a matter so supernatural, to enjoin men to follow his steps. *Whitby’s Annotations*.

†³ This word, which answers exactly with the Hebrew *Satan*, signifies a *calumniator* or *accuser*; and, as it occurs in Scripture always in the singular number, is supposed to denote that evil spirit who tempted our first parents, the chief of the rebel angels, and the avowed enemy of the saints 1 Thess. iii. 5. and 1 Pet. v. 8, &c. *Beausobre’s Annotations*.

(a) Deut. viii. 3

†⁴ According to the description that Josephus gives us of the temple which Herod built, we hear of no pinnacles or lofty turrets above the rest of the building; and therefore have reason to think, that the *πτερυγιον*, which is rendered *pinnacle*, should rather signify the battlement, or that parapet-wall which was carried round the top of the temple (as well as private houses, Deut. xxii. 8.) to keep men from falling from the roof: And, if we may be allowed to conjecture on what part of the battlement it was that the devil placed our Saviour, it seems very likely that it was on the top of that gallery whose building (according to the same author) was so prodigiously high, and the valley underneath it so stupendously deep, that it turned one’s eyes and head to look from the top to the bottom of it, and was indeed one of the most confounding spectacles under the sun. *Hammond’s Annotations*, and *Jewish Antiq. lib. xv. c. 14.*

(b) Psal. xci. 11.

(c) Deut. vi. 16.

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air, to the top * of an exceeding high mountain, he there made a lively representation to him of all the kingdoms of the world, with all their dazzling glories, at one view, and then told him, that "these, with all their pomp and splendour, were delivered to his disposal, and should be given to him, if he would but acknowledge his benefactor, and worship him:" But this was a boldness and blasphemy such as provoked our Lord to exert his Divine power, and to command him peremptorily to be gone; but with this memento out of Scripture likewise, (a) "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve:" Whereupon the devil left him for that time, and angels, sent from heaven, came with refreshments for him after his triumphant combat.

During our Saviour's fasting and temptation in the wilderness, his faithful forerunner, John the Baptist, being thus assured both by the descent of the Spirit, and the voice from heaven, that Jesus was the true and long-expected Messiah, made full and open declarations of it to all the multitude that came to hear him; and when the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem had sent a deputation of their priests and Levites (who were of the sect of the † Pharisees) to demand of him "Who he was?" he very readily acknowledged that he was not the Messiah whom they expected, nor Elias, who (as they imagined) would personally appear among them, nor any other prophet †² risen from the dead;

* The best account that we have, both of the wilderness and high mountain where our Lord was tempted, is in the travels of Mr Maundrell (for the ancients tell us very little of them), who informs us,—That, in his journey from Jerusalem to Jordan, after he had passed over Mount Olivet, he proceeded in an intricate way, among hills and valleys interchangeably; and after some hours travel in this sort of road, arrived at the mountainous desert, into which our Blessed Saviour was "led by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil;" "A miserable dry place, says he, it is, consisting of high rocky mountains, so torn and disordered, as if the earth had here suffered some great convulsion, in which its very bowels had been turned outward.—From the tops of these hills of desolation we had however a delightful prospect of the mountains of Arabia, the Dead Sea, and the plains of Jericho, into which last we descended after about five hours march from Jerusalem. As soon as we entered the plain we turned upon the left hand, and going about one hour that way, came to the foot of the Quarantania (so called from our Lord's forty days fast), which, they say, is the mountain where the devil tempted him with the visionary scene of all the kingdoms and glories of the world. It is very high and steep, and its ascent not only difficult but dangerous." This is the account which our countryman gives us of the place where our Saviour was probably tempted; but it is not supposable that, even from the highest mountain of the world, the devil could shew all the kingdoms of it; and therefore the most rational account of this matter is, that, "as he was the prince of the power of the air, he formed an airy horizon (as Dr Lightfoot expresses it) before the eyes of Christ, which might carry such a pompous and glorious appearance of kingdoms, states, and royalties in the face of it, as if he had seen those very kingdoms and states in reality." God, we are told, caused Moses to see the whole land of promise from the top of Nebo (as it is generally thought), by representing it to him in a large plan, or map of it, in all the valleys round about him; and in like manner, by the Divine per-

mission, in all the valleys round about the high mountain on which our Lord stood, the devil might make a large draught of the stately edifices, the guards, and attendants of kings and princes, appearing in their splendour, visible to his eye, which he could not have seen so advantageously had he stood on a plain. *Wells's* Geography of the New Testament, *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Pool's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

• (a) Deut. vi. 13.

† The Sanhedrim (whose business it was to take cognizance of the pretensions of all prophets when they began to appear in the world, and to enquire into their authority and mission) thought proper, out of their body, to depute such as were of this sect, because, as they were persons who believed the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body, they were better qualified than the Sadducees, who believed neither, to enquire of John, "whether he was Elias?" Being in this particular mere Pythagoreans, and fancying, that the soul of one great or good man might frequently pass into another's body. Joseph. Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 2. and de Bello Jud. lib. ii. c. 8. And as they were the patrons of tradition, and exact in all the ordinary rules and customs that were to be observed, they were the proper persons to examine into this new rite of baptism, by way of preparation for the Messiah, of which their traditions were wholly silent, and therefore they ask him, "why baptizest thou?" i. e. "Why usurpest thou an authority which belongs to none but either to the Messiah, Elias, or some prophet; by initiating us, who are already under the covenant, into a new doctrine by baptism, which is usually administered to none but heathen proselytes?" And from hence it appears, that the Pharisees were the properest men to send to the Baptist upon this message. *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

†² It was a received tradition among the Jews, that, at the coming of the Messiah, several of the ancient prophets should arise from the dead. *Beausobre's* Annotations.

but then he gave them to understand, that though he was not Elias himself, yet he was that prophet whom Isaiah intended when he called him, "the voice of one † crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord;" that his baptism was only of water, but the efficacy of it depended upon one among them, whom they knew not; one who succeeded him indeed in time, but so far surpassed him in dignity, that he was not worthy so much as to be his servant.

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The very next day, after the departure of the Pharisees, as our Saviour was returning from the wilderness to Bethabara, John pointed him out to the multitude as "the immaculate Lamb †² of God which taketh away the sins of mankind;" and then freely declared, that he was the very person of whose superiority, both in dignity and existence he had spoken, and of whom, by certain tokens, he both knew, and "could bear record that he was the Son of God."

To two of his own disciples the next day he gave the same testimony, insomuch that they left their old master and followed Jesus; and when Andrew †³ (who was one of them) went and discovered the same thing to his elder brother Simon, he in like manner became one of his disciples, to whom, the day following, were adjoined Philip, an inhabitant of the city Bethsaida †⁴, and an intimate friend of his (a) named Nathaniel, of Cana in Galilee, and supposed to be the same with the apostle Bartholomew.

This Nathaniel, at his very first coming, upon our Saviour's expressing some tokens of his Omniscience, made a liberal confession of his being the Messiah, the son of God; whereupon our Saviour assured him, that in a short time he should have a fuller conviction of his divinity, when he should see the angels of heaven †⁵ ascending and descend-

† It is the opinion of some, that John chose rather to preach and to fulfil his ministry in the wilderness than in the temple, in order to make a more illustrious difference between himself, who was but a messenger, (whose office it was to prepare his Lord's way) and his Lord himself, of whom it was prophesied that he should frequently appear and teach in the temple, Mal. iii. 1. *Pool's* Annotations.

†² Under the Jewish law, when any sacrifice was offered for sin, he that brought it laid his hand upon it, according to the commandment of God, Lev. i. 4. iii. 2. iv. 4. and by that rite transferred his sins upon the victim, which, after such act, is said "to take and to carry them away." Accordingly, in the daily sacrifice of the lamb, the stationary men, who were the representatives of the people, laid their hands upon the lambs that were to be offered, and when they were thus offered they are said to make an "atonement for their souls," Exod. xxx. 15, 16. and, in analogy hereunto, Christ is here called, by way of eminence, "the Lamb of God," because God intended to "lay upon him who was manifest to take away sin," 1 John iii. 5. and came to suffer in our stead, what, inflicted on ourselves, would have been the punishment due to the "iniquities of us all." *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

†³ The other in all probability was John, the beloved apostle and evangelist, (because he describes the circumstances of the time and conversation that passed so very punctually, John i. 40.) but in this, and several other places of his Gospel, (according to his wonted modesty) he chuses to conceal his name. *Hammond's* Annotations.

†⁴ There is no mention of this place in the Old Testament; and the reason is, because (as *Josephus*

tells us) it was but a very small village, till Philip the tetrarch built it up to the bulk and appearance of a very magnificent city, and gave it the name of Julias, out of respect to Julia, the daughter of Augustus Cæsar. Its original name, in the Hebrew tongue, imports a place of fishing, or else hunting, and for both these exercises it was very commodiously situated. As it belonged to the tribe of Naphtali, a country remarkable for its plenty of deer, Gen. xlix. 21. it was excellently fitted for the latter of these pastimes; and as it lay on the north end of the lake of Gennezareth, just where the river Jordan runs into it, it was so commodious for the former, that two of the persons just now mentioned, viz. Peter and Andrew, were fishermen by trade. *Wells's* Geography of the New Testament.

(a) John xxi. 2.

†⁵ To ascend and descend, to come and go, (according to the Hebrew manner of expression) denotes a free and familiar commerce, and such no doubt was the ministry of angels at our Saviour's temptation and agony, at his resurrection and ascension. The words however must be owned to be a plain allusion to Jacob's ladder, Gen. xxviii. 12, 13. on the top of which was the Divine Majesty, and the angels ascending to receive his commands, and descending to execute them: and therefore others have thought that Christ by these words intended to inform his apostles, "That the miracles which they should soon see him perform would declare the Divine Majesty present with him, and giving him such commands as he was to execute in his prophetic office, as clearly and manifestly as if they had seen the angels of God 'ascending and descending upon him'." *Whitby's* Annotations.

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ing, (as they did once in the vision to Jacob) to attend the person and execute the orders of the Son of Man †.

With these five disciples, Jesus †² and his mother were invited next day to a marriage-feast in Cana †³, a small place in Galilee, not far from Nazareth. At this solemnity there happened to be a scarcity of wine, which when his mother understood, she made her application to him, in hopes that, by some means or other, he would not fail to supply the defect. In other instances, no doubt she had been made sensible of his supernatural power; and therefore, (though his answer to her seems to carry in it the appearance of a denial) she still expected something extraordinary from him, and therefore ordered the waiters to obey his commands with the utmost exactness.

The custom of the Jews in all their entertainments was, to use frequent washings; and for this purpose there were, in a certain private room, six water-cisterns, containing each about twenty gallons of our measure. These our Saviour commanded the servants to fill up to the brim, and when they had so done, to carry the liquor to the governor of the feast, for him to distribute to the rest of the company, as the manner then was. But when the governor had tasted it, he was not a little surprized; and, calling to the bridegroom, told him with a pleasant air, "That at most entertainments like this, it was an usual thing for people to bring out their best wine at first, and worse when the guests had drank plentifully; but that he, contrary to the common custom, had reserved his best to the latter end of the feast."

This was the first miracle our Saviour did in any public manner, which proved both a manifestation of his own divinity and a confirmation of his disciples' faith. From Cana he went down to †⁴ Capernaum, the place where he usually afterwards resided;

† It is observed by several, that only Ezekiel in the Old Testament, and our Saviour in the New, are called by this name; that our Saviour is never so called but by himself, and that this is the common appellation that he gives himself. Ezekiel was doubtless so called, to distinguish him from those spiritual beings with whom he so frequently conversed: and our Saviour took upon him that title, not only to distinguish his human from his Divine nature, but to express his humility likewise, and want of reputation, while he "continued in the form of a servant." Chemnitius, however, puts another construction upon this title: He thinks, that, as the term Messiah (which is commonly called Christ) was taken out of Daniel, so that other of the "Son of Man" is taken from thence likewise; for behold one "like the Son of Man," (says the prophet) "came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days," chap. vii. 13. and that therefore our Saviour did usually call himself so, in compliance to the prophecy, as well as to assert his humanity, and declare himself his Father's servant, according to the character given of him by Isaiah xlii. 1. *Pool's Annotations.*

†² In all probability it was at some relation's house that this marriage was kept, because Mary was solicitous for the supply of wine; and the opinion of the ancients is, that it was at the house of Alphæus, otherwise named Cleophas, whose wife was Mary, the sister or cousin-german of the Blessed Virgin, and who, at this time, married his son Simon the Canaanite, Matth. x. 4.; though others will have it that the bridegroom was Nathaniel. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations.*

†³ This is called Cana of Galilee to distinguish it

from another town of the same name, mentioned Josh. xix. 28. belonging to the tribe of Asher, not far from the city of Sidon, and so situated much more north than this Cana was. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*

†⁴ This city is no where mentioned in the Old Testament, either under this or any name like it; and therefore it is not improbable that it was one of those towns which the Jews built after their return from the Babylonish captivity. It stood on the sea coast, i. e. on the coast of the sea of Galilee, in the borders of Zebulon and Naphthaliim, Matth. iv. 15, 16. and consequently towards the upper part thereof. It took its name, no doubt, from an adjacent spring of great repute for its clear and limpid waters, and which (according to Josephus) is, by the natives, called Capernaum. As this spring might be some inducement for the building of the town in the place where it stood, so its being a convenient wafting place from Galilee to any parts on the other side of the sea, might be some motive to our Lord for his moving from Nazareth, and making this the place of his most constant residence. Upon this account Capernaum was highly honoured, and is said by our Lord himself to be "exalted unto heaven;" but because it made no right use of this signal favour, it drew from him the severe denunciation that it should "be brought down to hell," Matth. xi. 23. which has abundantly been verified; for so far is it from being the metropolis of all Galilee, (as it was once) that it consisted, long since, of no more than six poor fishermen's cottages, and may, perhaps, be now totally desolate. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

but his stay at this time was not long there, because his purpose was to go to Jerusalem at the approaching feast of the passover †.

As soon as our Saviour came to Jerusalem, the first thing he did was to reform the public abuse and profanation of the temple, occasioned by the shops which money-changers had set up, and the beasts which the dealers therein used to bring into the court of the Gentiles †². This our Lord's zeal for his Father's honour could not well brook; and therefore, with a scourge made of cords, he drove all the sellers || and barterers from the sacred ground, overturned the tables †³ of the money-changers, and commanded those who dealt in doves or pigeons to take away their goods, and "make his Father's house no longer a house of merchandise."

This extraordinary procedure incensed the Jews to such a degree, that they came and demanded of him by what †⁴ authority he did these things, and to give them some

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Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

† This feast is so well known, and has been so fully explained at the time of its first institution, Exod. xii. that we need only remind our reader, that from the word *pasach*, which signifies to leap or skip over, the Jews gave the name of Pascha or Passover, to that great festival which was annually appointed in commemoration of their coming forth out of Egypt; because, the night before their departure, the destroying angel, who slew the first-born of the Egyptians, passed over the houses of the Israelites which were marked with the blood of the lamb killed the evening before, and for this reason called the *paschal lamb*. The feast itself began on the fourteenth day of Nisan, which is the first month in their sacred, but the seventh in the civil year, and answers in part to our March and April; but as the Jews began their days at six in the evening, this feast was to continue seven days compleat, and so ended on the one and twentieth day in the evening. *Calmet's Dictionary* under the word.

†² There were three courts belonging to the temple. The court of the priests where the altar of incense stood; the court of the Israelites where the Jews that were clean, and the proselytes of justice, i. e. those who had embraced circumcision and the whole law of Moses, met at their devotions; and the court of the Gentiles, where the unclean Jew and the Gentile, who owned the true God, without professing Judaism, were permitted to come and worship. Now, under the same pretext of having the sacrifices near at hand, as well as out of a contempt of that court where the Gentile worshippers were permitted to enter, the priests, for their sordid gain, had permitted beasts and poultry to be brought within this court, and graziers and hucksters, (whose business properly was in the markets of Jerusalem) to mix with people at their devotions, which was an abuse notoriously scandalous. *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Eachard's Ecclesiastical History*, chap. iii.

|| It may possibly be asked, How our Blessed Lord, with nothing but a whip in his hand, should be able to execute this heroic act upon a multitude of people, who might suffer damage in their wares, and consequently be in a disposition to resist him? Now, whoever considers that our Saviour had done enough already to prove himself a prophet sent from God, and that the general concession was, that a prophet

thus sent had sufficient authority to rectify disorders; if he remembers, at the same time, the great reverence that was constantly paid to the temple, and what titles of honour and respect were given it by God himself, cannot but allow that the present abuse of it was abominable, our Saviour's zeal in redressing it commendable, and that, from all thinking and disinterested persons, it would consequently meet with countenance and approbation. Nor is it to be doubted, but that a consciousness of guilt in the profaners themselves, might, in some measure, contribute to their submission and acquiescence; even in the same manner as his enemies were struck backwards with a sense of their own guilt, as well as the majesty of his appearance, and fell down to the ground, when they came to apprehend him in the garden, John xviii. 6. *Pool's Annotations*, and *Bishop Smallbrook's Vindication*, p. 146.

†³ It was an appointment of the law that every man, from twenty years old and upwards, should annually pay into the treasury of the temple, in order to defray the expence of the daily sacrifices, the sum of half a shekel, Exod. xxx. 12, 15. This, and the voluntary oblations of people of all ranks, occasioned a necessity of changing greater coin into less, and very often of foreign coins into that which was current in the nation. Under the pretence therefore of having things near at hand, the priests took this opportunity to gratify their covetousness, by letting out places to money-changers, who to make up their rent (which very likely was exorbitant) might extort from those that came to them, or (as Origen imagines) give them ἀγνύιον ἀδίκιον, *base money* instead of *good*, and so made the temple a den of thieves. *Whitby's Annotations* on Matth. xxi. 13.

†⁴ Whether it were the priests, the magistrates, or the common people, that put this question to our Saviour, it is certain that they do not in the least pretend to justify the profanation which he had thus reformed; and therefore their principle seems to have been, "That let the corruptions and abuses in a church be never so great, yet they were not to be reformed, but either by the ordinary authority of the magistrate, or by an extraordinary authority from God. Such an authority they were ready to acknowledge in prophets; but then they expected that those who pretended to this, and to have their mission from

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evidence of his having a commission so to do : But to this he made no other reply than by foretelling his own resurrection, expressed in the metaphor of the temple, which they understood of the temple at Jerusalem, that had been || six and forty years a-building, but he of the temple † of his own body, which in three days, after they had slain it, he promised to revive. Though therefore at this time he refused to work any miracle at the instigation of the Jews, yet shortly after we find him working many, which surprised the whole city, and excited the curiosity of one person in particular, whose name was Nicodemus, (a considerable man in the Sanhedrim and of the sect of the Pharisees), to repair to him (but privately and in the night-time, for fear of being known), and to declare freely to him, "That he verily believed he was come immediately from heaven, because the miracles ||² which he wrought were a demonstration of it."

†² Hereupon our Blessed Saviour took occasion to let him know, that this belief was not the only qualification requisite to become his disciple, and then proceeded to instruct him in the great mystery of regeneration, telling him, "That as no production could transcend the nature and condition of its parent flesh, for instance, though never so much diversified, could still produce no more than flesh; so this formation of a new creature was to be effected by different principles, namely, by the water of baptism †⁵ washing away sins, and by the holy spirit, giving a power and efficacy to

God, should be able to prove that mission by some miraculous operations." But how they came to put this question to our Lord, after they had seen his miracles, and knew that he claimed a Divine commission, and had told them "that the works he had done in his Father's name bore witness of him," John v. 36. can be imputed to nothing but their perverseness and obstinate infidelity. *Pool's Annotations.*

|| From Herod's beginning to rebuild the temple to this first passover after our Saviour's baptism, it is agreed that the time was exactly six and forty years; but then Josephus, *Antiq. lib. xv. c. 14.* tells us, that the whole was finished in nine years and an half. But this is to be understood of the grand building only, since (according to the same author, *lib. xx. c. 8.*), several new works and decorations were still carrying on, and near eighteen thousand men employed therein, even to the time that young Agrippa was made king of Judea, which was about the sixtieth year of the Christian era. *Calmet's Comment.* and *Beausobre's Annotations.*

† The Jews had a maxim or proverbial speech among them, that the sanctuary of sanctuaries was the Messiah, and therefore there could be no impropriety in our Saviour's calling his body a temple: For if the apostle calls our bodies the temple of God, as he does 1 Cor. iii. 16. and 2 Cor. vi. 16. how much more does that title belong to the body of Christ, in which "the fulness of the Godhead dwelt" always and inseparably? *Pool's and Beausobre's Annotations.*

||² But are miracles alone a demonstration of a person's being sent by God? Nicodemus was not ignorant of the caution which Moses had given the Jews against false prophets, *Deut. xii. 1.* &c. nor does he here speak of miracles in general, but of those particular ones which Jesus had done in the time of the passover; and these were so great in their nature, so solid in their proof, so beneficial in their effects, and in their end so well designed to confirm a doctrine

every way suitable to the Divine attributes, and to fulfil the prophecies concerning the Messiah, "the Sun of Righteousness, who was to rise with healing in his wings," *Mal. iv. 2.* that there was the greatest assurance that none without an omnipotent hand could do them. Not to say that Nicodemus might have both examined the doctrine and enquired into the life of Jesus, before he made that inference from his miracles. *Pool's Annotations,* and *Calmet's Commentary.*

†² Some have imagined, from the seeming abruptness of the answer which our Lord gives Nicodemus, that Nicodemus might have put some previous question to him (not recorded by the evangelist) concerning the means of attaining the kingdom of God, i. e. eternal happiness, or of qualifying himself to be a disciple of the Messiah; for in that sense the kingdom of God is likewise taken. But (besides that the term *answered* does not always in the New Testament signify a reply to a question already propounded, but very frequently no more than the beginning of a new speech) the connection between the compliment which Nicodemus makes our Lord and our Lord's reply to it, will not be amiss, if we can but suppose in the words this implication:—"Thy acknowledgment of my Divine mission and authority, free and generous though it be, will not be sufficient to render thee a member of that kingdom which I am going to set up; for "except a man be born again," i. e. renewed in his mind, will, and affections, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, and so become a new creature, "he cannot see the kingdom of God," i. e. he cannot be a Christian here or a saint hereafter. *Pool's, Whitby's,* and *Hammond's Annotations.*

†³ Those who make the water and the spirit, here mentioned by our Saviour, one and the same thing, (which, to every common reader, must at first sight appear to be distinct) would do well to consider that

mens endeavours to do well; which Spirit "bloweth where it listeth," and is, as the wind, certain and notorious in its effects, but secret in the principle and manner of its production."

This doctrine of regeneration (which to Nicodemus † seemed so very abstruse) "our Saviour proceeds to tell him was no more, in respect of other mysteries of the Gospel, than the earth is in comparison of the heavens, and so goes on to acquaint him with matters of a more sublime nature; with his descent from heaven, his death, his ascension, and the blessing of that redemption which he came into the world to accomplish. He instructs him in the love of the Father, the mission of the Son, the rewards of faith, and the glories of eternity. He upbraids the unbelieving and impenitent, and declares the difference between a pure and corrupt conscience, the shame and fears of the one, and the confidence and serenity of the other."

This is the substance of our Saviour's discourse to Nicodemus, who afterwards became a convert; and no sooner was the passover ended, but our Lord, in company with many of his disciples, who by his miraculous works were convinced of his Divinity, went about the province of Judea †², making proselytes wherever he came, and causing them to be baptized by the hands of his disciples, because himself was employed in greater affairs, viz. in teaching the people, and relieving their necessities.

John the Baptist had at this time removed his station from Bethabara to Ænon, a place remarkable (as its name imports) for springs and waters, and therefore of great conveniency for baptizing. While he was there, a dispute happened to arise between his disciples and certain Jews who were present, which of the baptisms, that of John or that of Jesus was preferable? And when his disciples, by way of appeal to John, came and acquainted him, that the person of whom he had given such honourable testi-

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the question between Christ and Nicodemus was about what was requisite to prepare a man for the kingdom, i. e. God's church, and make him partaker of the gospel blessing. Certain it is, that "baptism by water" was not only the common method of receiving proselytes into the Jewish church, but it is declared likewise by our Lord himself to be the ordinary way of entering into his kingdom; "for he that believeth and is baptized, says he, shall be saved," Mark. xvi. 16. and therefore he gave commission to his apostles "to make disciples in all nations by baptizing them," Matth. xxviii. 19. Nay, so far are the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit from superseding the necessity of this ordinance, that in the apostolic age, we find them rather esteemed a proper predisposition for it: for when the Holy Ghost fell upon Cornelius and his company, in the same manner that it fell upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 2. what is St Peter's inference from these miraculous gifts? Is it that the persons on whom they rested had no need of baptism? No; but rather that these extraordinary gifts were a full evidence that they were the proper objects of it; for, "can any one (says he) forbid water, that these should not be baptized?" So far is the baptism of the Spirit (even where it is undeniable) from excluding the baptism of water, and so strong a proof is the instance before us, that the graces of the Spirit may be the foundation of a just claim to baptism, but never (where the sacrament can be had) a lawful dispensation to any man for the refusal or neglect of it. *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels* vol. iii.

† Our Blessed Saviour might well wonder at Nicodemus's ignorance in the point of regeneration, when this was the common notion of proselytism among the Jews, that he who was washed, and circumcised, was looked upon as a *recens natus*, an *infant new born*: And when there were so many passages in the law and the prophets relating to this very doctrine; for what else can the meaning be of the "circumcision of the heart," commanded by Moses, Deut. x. 16. of the "renewal of a clean and right spirit," prayed for by David, Psal. li. 10. of the "putting God's law in the inward parts," mentioned by Jeremiah chap. xxxi. 33. and the giving of his people a "new heart and a new spirit," promised by God, Ezek. xxxvi. 26? These, and many more, were intimations of the doctrine of regeneration; but the Pharisees were so taken up with their rites and traditions, that they gave small attention to the spiritual things of nearer and much greater concernment to their souls. *Pool's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

†² The evangelist does no where mention the particular place where our Saviour began his baptism; but there is reason to presume that it was somewhere about Jericho, because there it was that John the Baptist first entered upon his ministry; because it seems expedient, that he should open the first scene of his office, where his faithful forerunner had given such glorious and advantageous testimonies of him, and in one and the same place, compleat John's baptism of repentance for sins, (which was preparatory to his coming) by the baptism of remission of sins, which he alone had proper power to give. *Calmet's Commentary*.

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mony, received proselytes (and that in vast numbers) by the same ceremony of baptism as he did, John repeated the same testimony again, and reminded his disciples how frequently he had told them, "That the person of whom they spake was the Messiah, whom God had sent into the world for the salvation of mankind, and himself no more than his herald; and that his ministry therefore was now going to decline, even as, upon the approach of the sun, the glory of the morning star decreases." And having said many things of the like nature to prove Jesus to be the Son of God, and co-equal with the Father, he closed up his commission with these important words "He that believes on the Son, hath everlasting life; but he that believeth not on the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

John was at this time in the territories of Herod Antipas *, and as he was a man of great freedom of speech upon all occasions, he was not afraid, when he came to Herod's court, to reprove him for his many enormities, and particularly for his cohabiting with Herodias *², the wife of his brother Philip, who was still living. This exasperated the woman against him to such a degree, that though Herod at first had some esteem and reverence for him, yet, by her malicious instigations †, she prevailed with him to cast him into prison, with a purpose to have him destroyed, whenever she could find out a proper opportunity.

About the time of John's imprisonment, our Lord, who, by the hands of his apostles †², had been baptizing for near seven or eight months in Judea, understanding that

* This Antipas, or Antipater, (for they are words of the same signification) was the son of Herod the Great, by one of his wives named Cleopatra, a native of Jerusalem. In his first will, his father (as we said before) named him successor to his kingdom; but afterwards he changed his mind, made his son Archelaus king of Judea, and gave to Antipas the title only of Tetrarch of Galilee and Petrea, which made him appeal to Augustus at Rome, in order to have his father's former will confirmed, and the latter reversed, but he did not attain his end. *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvii.*

*² This woman was the daughter of Aristobulus and Bernice, sister to king Agrippa, and grand-daughter to Herod the Great. She was at first married to her uncle Philip, son of the same Herod by Mariamne, by whom she had a daughter named Salome, the same who pleased Herod so well in her dancing; and how she came to run from one brother to live with another, Josephus has thus related the story.— "Antipas, in his passage to Rome, made some stay with his brother Philip, where he fell so passionately in love with his wife Herodias, that he could not forbear expressing it to her, and promised her witbal, that at his return from Rome, he would put away his own wife and marry her. Upon these conditions Herodias accepted of the offer; and as soon as Antipas was returned, and his wife gone, (for she having notice of the engagement between her husband and Herodias, made her escape to her father Aretas, king of Petra) she, with her daughter Salome, left her husband Philip, and, coming directly to Antipas, for ever after lived with him in a state of incest, *Lev. xviii. 15.* nor was her ambition much less criminal than her lust: For, growing uneasy to see her brother Agrippa promoted to the title of a king, while her new husband Antipas had no more than that of a tetrarch, she pressed him so much, that he determined

to make a journey to Rome, with an intention to ask the like dignity of Caligula the emperor; but the emperor being prejudiced by several letters which Agrippa had written against Antipas, instead of advancing him, deprived him of his tetrarchy, and condemned him to perpetual banishment." The emperor, however, understanding that Herodias was Agrippa's sister, shewed an inclination to pardon her; but she chose rather to follow her husband in the calamity she had brought upon him, than to owe any thing to her brother's fortune: so that they were both confiscated and banished together, first into France, and afterwards into Spain, where they died. *Jewish Antiq. lib. 8. c. 9.*

† The evangelists have assigned the true reason for the Baptist's imprisonment: But since the Pharisees, very probably, represented him as an author of a new sect, a promoter of seditions and rebellions, and a person dangerous to the government, by reason of the multitude of his followers, Antipas craftily made that his pretence (as appears from Josephus, *lib. xviii. c. 7.*) for confining him: and the better to remove him from the people, sent him bound out of Galilee into Petrea, to a strong castle, called Machærus, near the Dead Sea, and towards the borders of Arabia, where he continued above a year in prison. *Eachard's Ecclesiastical History, c. 3.*

†² Several reasons may be assigned why our Saviour delegated the office of baptizing to his apostles. 1. Because it was no ways proper for him to baptize in his own name. 2. Because the baptism that was peculiarly his was the baptism of the Holy Ghost, *Acts xi. 16.* 3. Because it was an office of more importance to preach the Gospel than to baptize, *1 Cor. i. 17.* And, 4. Because Christ's baptizing of any might possibly have occasioned disgusts and jealousies among the disciples, in the same manner as, in the early ages of the church, we find people valuing

the Pharisees began to be envious at him for the great multitudes of people that resorted to him, resolved to leave that province and pass into † Galilee, in order to enter upon the more solemn part of his ministerial function. In this journey it was necessary for him to pass through Samaria †²; and, as he travelled on foot, and the weather was hot, when he came within a little of †³ Sychar, he sent his disciples into the city to buy provisions, and sat himself down by the side of a famous well, called Jacob's well †⁴.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

While he was sitting there, a woman of a loose life and conversation came out of the city to draw water; and when he requested some of her to drink, she, perceiving that he was a Jew, took the freedom to ask him, How he could offer any such request to a Samaritan, since there were so great feuds, and so little dealings †⁵ between them and

themselves and despising others, upon their being baptized by such or such an eminent apostle, 1 Cor. i. 12. *Beausobre's* Annotations.

† It is a province of Palestine, which extends itself chiefly into the northern parts thereof. The tribes which it contains are, Issachar, Zebulun, Naphthali, and Asher, with part (as some say) of Dan, and Parnæa, beyond the Jordan. On the north it is bounded by Lebanon and Syria; on the west by Phœnicia; on the south by Samaria; and on the east mostly by the river Jordan, and the sea of Galilee. It is generally divided into two parts, the Upper and the Lower Galilee, whereof the former is called Galilee of the Gentiles, Matth. iv. 15. either because it was chiefly possessed by the Gentiles, with Jews interspersed among them, or rather because it bordered upon Gentile nations, such as the Phœnicians, Syrians, and Arabians. The whole country (according to Josephus) was fruitful and well cultivated, and the people laborious and industrious. The number of its towns and villages was prodigiously great, and so well inhabited, that the least of them did not contain less than fifteen thousand souls. The natives were a bold intrepid race of men, who defended themselves bravely against the foreign nations that surrounded them, but then their wealth and prowess made them seditious, and very apt to rebel against the Romans, for which they sometimes suffered very much. *Whitby's* Alphabetical Table.

†² It is a province of Palestine (so called from its city of the same name, that was once the capital of the kingdom of Israel), which lies exactly between Judea to the south and Galilee to the north, and extends itself from the Mediterranean Sea westward to the river Jordan eastward, taking up the most considerable part of what formerly belonged to the tribe of Ephraim, and the half tribe of Manasseh, on the west side of Jordan. *Wells's* Geography of the New Testament.

†³ Sychar is only a corrupt pronunciation of Sychem, or Shechem, which is the capital of the country that was once called Samaria. At present it is called Naplosa, and stands in a narrow valley, between Mount Gerizzim on the south (at the foot of which it is situate), and Ebal on the north. On Mount Gerizzim they had once a temple, which seemed to rival that of Jerusalem, but in the time of the Maccabees, it was destroyed by Hyrcanus, and what they

have now is only a little place of worship, to which, at certain seasons, they nevertheless repair for the performance of the rites of their religion; but what those rites are, it is not easy to say. The whole place, in short, is strangely decayed from what it was anciently; for it consists only of two streets, that lie parallel under Mount Gerizzim, but it is full of inhabitants, and the seat of a Bassa. *Wells's* Geography of the New Testament.

†⁴ It is much to be questioned, whether the well that is at present shewn to travellers for Jacob's well, be that where our Saviour discoursed the Samaritan woman, because it seems to be too remote from the town for women to come thither to draw water; unless we suppose, that the city did formerly extend itself farther than way than it does now. However this be, the well is at present covered with a small vault into which you get down through a very strait hole, and then removing a broad flat stone, you discover the mouth of the well itself. It is dug in a firm rock, about three yards in diameter, and thirty-five in depth; and, to confute the story which is commonly told to travellers, (viz. that it is all the year dry, except on the anniversary when our Saviour sat upon it, but that then it bubbles up with abundance of water) Mr Maundrell tells us, that when they came to sound it, they found no less than five yards of water in it. *Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*, and *Wells's* Geography of the New Testament.

†⁵ The chief reasons of the Jewish hatred against the Samaritans were these three, 1st, The foreign extraction of the Samaritans, they being most of them descendants from the Cutheans whom Salmanazar sent to Samaria, when he carried away the ten tribes into captivity. 2 Kings xviii. 9. 2dly, The difference of their religion and worship, forasmuch as that of the Samaritans was a kind of mixture of Jewish and Pagan rites together; and, 3dly, The rival temple which the Samaritans had built on Mount Gerizzim, and consecrated to Jupiter Olympus, in order to avoid the persecution of Antiochus. Joseph. Antiq. lib. xii. c. 7. These were the chief causes of the animosities between them. The Jews, however, did not carry their resentment so high, but that in some cases they would traffic or buy any thing of them; but then the Pharisees came in with a tradition that they were not to borrow any thing of them, or receive any kindness from them, nor drink of their water, or eat of their

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the Jews? Little did the woman know the excellency of the person who asked her so small a favour; but, in some measure to convince her, our Lord took occasion from hence, under the metaphor of water, to discourse to her of spiritual blessings, and, to make her sensible of his omniscience, he reminded her of some passages of her life, particularly of the † five times she had been divorced for her adulteries, and of the state of fornication wherein she then lived.

Convinced by this discovery that he was a prophet, she propounded to him the great question so much controverted between the Jews and Samaritans, viz. Which was the proper place of public worship, Gerizzim or Jerusalem? To which our Saviour in his answer gives manifestly the preference to the Jewish form and place of worship; but makes it a question of no great moment, since the time was approaching when all sacrifices and ceremonial rights should cease, and when God, who is a spirit, expected to be worshipped in a more †² rational and spiritual manner than hitherto he had been.

Our Saviour, before he had done talking with the woman, and just as his disciples were returned from the city, had informed her, that himself was the (a) Messiah whom she spoke of; whereupon, leaving her water-pots, she ran into the city, proclaiming aloud, that she had met with a person who had told her all the secrets of her life, and who could be no other than that great prophet who was to come into the world; so that the inhabitants waited on him at the well, invited him into their city, received him with great civility, and though some believed on him from the testimony of the woman, many more did so from their own conviction, in hearing his sermons and divine discourses.

After two days stay in the city, our Lord proceeded to Cana, where he had changed

morsels. This, however, our Lord despised, as having no foundation either in the law of God or equity, and as tending to impair the law of common friendship and humanity; and therefore we find him asking to drink with the Samaritan woman, and afterwards going into the city, and eating with the Sechemites. *Beausobre's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

† The words in the text are, "thou hast had five husbands," but whether five successively, and after the death of one another, or five, from whom she had been divorced for adultery, is not agreed. The best modern interpreters, however, judge, that she had been married to five several men, but so behaved herself towards them, that for her adultery, or some other froward behaviour, they had given her a bill of divorce. This seems more likely to be the true sense, than that after the death of five legal husbands she should live in whoredom with a sixth person. *Pool's* Annotations.

†² The Jews gave it out, that the Samaritans worshipped God "in the image of a dove;" but this seems to be a mere forgery upon them, 1st, Because among all the idols which they worshipped when they came from Assyria, there is not the least hint of the "image of a dove;" 2dly, Because Josephus, who, in several places of his history, inveighs against them bitterly, does no where charge them with this crime; and, 3dly, Because it is a thing utterly inconsistent with the law of Moses which they embraced; for as it forbids all images, so it requires men to sacrifice the dove to God; and surely nothing can be more absurd than to worship that which we are bound to sacrifice. It is very likely therefore that the Samaritans had no false objects of worship among them, and yet they

as well as the Jews might not be furnished with right apprehensions of the true One. They both were to blame, no doubt, in confining the worship of God to any particular place, and thinking that he could not be rightly adored, but either at Gerizzim, according to the one, or at Jerusalem, according to the other, when his presence is certainly every where; and in every nation, "he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him," Acts xi. 35. They as well as the Jews might think, that God was pleased with outward ordinances, with sacrifices and expiations, which "sanctified only to the purifying of the flesh;" but perhaps they never supposed that these things were but types and figures of what was to succeed, and therefore to be of no longer continuance than until the "substance of the things themselves was come." They doubtless both had some expectations of a Messiah, but perhaps it never entered into their heads that he should be the angel of the covenant, who, with the incense of his blood, "should offer up the prayers of all the saints upon the altar that is before the throne," Rev. viii. 3. So that our Saviour, by this part of his discourse with the woman, plainly intimates, that, after his resurrection, and the promulgation of his gospel, not only the Jews and Samaritans, but the people of all nations whatever, should have righter notions of God, the only object of religious worship, of the extent and universality of his church, of the qualifications requisite in true worshippers, and of the Mediator, appointed by God to introduce and enforce their prayers. *Whitby's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

(a) Her words are, "I know that the Messias cometh, who is called Christ," John iv. 25.

the water into wine, and where the Galileans, who at the passover had seen the miracles which he did at Jerusalem, received him with great kindness and respect. Hither it was that an officer belonging to the court came, and addressed himself to him with great humility and reverence, desiring him that he would come and cure his son, who was just at the point of death; and when, with more importunity, he renewed his request, and our Lord, to shew the excellency of his power, that could cure in absence as well as presence, dismissed him with this assurance, "that his son was restored to health;" the believing father, joyfully returning home, was by the way congratulated with the welcome news of his son's recovery; and enquiring of his servants the hour when the child began to amend, by the account which they gave him, he perceived, that it was at the very instant when Jesus had declared to him, "thy son is well;" whereupon both he and his whole family, being convinced of our Saviour's divinity, were converted to the Christian faith.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

The imprisonment of John had put an end to his ministry; and therefore, to supply that loss, our Saviour himself began to preach the sum and substance of the gospel, faith, hope, and repentance, in the province of Galilee; and this he did in such an extraordinary manner, that he was admired by all, and his fame spread through the whole country. Coming however to Nazareth, the place of his education, he went into the † synagogue on the Sabbath-day; and when he †² stood up, and read (as the custom for lay-men was at that time) a passage in the prophet Isaiah, beginning with these words, (a) "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor," &c. which he applied to himself (but in general terms), and spake thereupon with so much gracefulness, that the eyes of the whole congregation were turned upon him, admiring his discourse; many, who had known him in the disadvantages of his education, began to have abject thoughts of him, upon the meanness of his extract, as if he had been no more than a carpenter's son; so that his taking an occasion to upbraid them with their ingratitude and insensibility, so far provoked the whole assembly, that they hurried him out of the city, and brought him to the brow of the hill on which it was built, with a design to have †³ cast him down from thence, and de-

† That the synagogue worship was at this time loaded with rites and ceremonies of human invention, that the priests were very defective in the discharge of their functions, and the manners of those who met there, very much corrupted, no one can doubt who is at all acquainted with the Scriptures and the Jewish history; and yet we find that our Saviour and his disciples (as members of the church of Nazareth) went constantly every Sabbath-day to these synagogues, preserving thereby "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," and not upon slight pretences "forsaking the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is," Heb. x. 25. *Whitby's Annotations.*

†² What the nature and design of synagogues were, and at what time, and upon what occasion, they were at first erected by the Jews, we have, in a particular dissertation, already discussed, and need only take notice, that though every synagogue had a settled reader, to whom was allowed an annual stipend, yet when any grave and learned person came in (especially if he was a stranger), it was customary to make him the compliment of reading the portion of Scripture appointed for the day, Acts xiii. 15. which he always did in a standing posture. For, "as the law was given with reverence," say the Jews, "so it

is to be handled with reverence;" and when he had read what he thought fit, he might, if he was so disposed and qualified, expound or comment upon it. The character which John the Baptist had given of our Saviour, and the miracles which he had lately done in Cana and Capernaum, might possibly excite the curiosity of the master of the synagogue to hear him read and expound; read in Hebrew and expound in Chaldee, as Ezra had introduced the custom. In reading the law, people were confined to the lesson of the day, but the Rabbins have observed, that, in reading the prophets, there was a greater licence allowed; and therefore, though our Saviour might read just where the book opened, yet there seems to be a good deal of the hand of God in directing him to a place which related to himself, and gave him so fair an opportunity of declaring the purpose of his coming into the world, viz. to publish redemption and liberty, pardon and reconciliation, with God. *Beausobre's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

(a) Isaiah lxi. 1.

†³ Such kind of popular executions were sometimes tolerated, and, under pretence of zeal for the law, several were put to death (especially in times of public calamity, and when the Jews were in their greatest distress, Joseph. de Bello Jud. lib. v.) without the

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stroyed him, had not he, by a miraculous power, † withdrawn himself from the fury of these wretched people, and left their city.

This barbarous treatment of the Nazarenes made our Saviour remove from them, and settle his habitation in Capernaum, which was the metropolis of Galilee, and by reason of the lake †² which was near it, a place highly convenient for his designs. He had not long been here before great multitudes flocked to him; and as he was walking one day by the side of the lake, with a crowd of people pressing upon him, he saw two fishing vessels ‖, one belonging to Peter and Andrew, and the other to James and John, (who were all partners and companions in that business) and stepping into Peter's ship, he desired him to put a little from the shore, that from thence he might preach to the people.

Peter and his companions had been hard at work all night, but without any manner of success; and therefore when sermon was ended, and our Saviour ordered Peter to launch out farther and to let down his nets for a draught, he modestly told him of their unsuccessful toiling all night, but nevertheless, in obedience to him, he was willing: Nor had he cause to repent; for upon letting down the nets, they inclosed such a multitude of fishes that their tackle began to break, so that they were forced to call to their

formality of justice. But what made the Nazarenes so exceeding outrageous against our Saviour was, his declaring them unworthy of the miracles he had done at Capernaum, his equalizing himself to some of the greatest of the ancient prophets, and, by the instances of the Sidonian woman, and Naaman the Syrian, plainly intimating, that his gospel should chiefly be received by the Gentiles. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*.

† How he got out of their hands, when they had laid hold of him, the Scripture does not tell us; nor is it our concern to be curious to enquire. We know very well, that it was an easy thing for him, who was God as well as man, to quit himself of any mortal enemies: But how he did it, whether it was by blinding them for the present, or making himself invisible, or merely by allaying their rage, and changing their wills, it is impossible to determine. Which way soever he did it, it was certainly something miraculous, and therefore deprived the Nazarenes of the liberty of complaining that he had done no miracles among them. *Pool's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Comment*.

†² This lake, which, according to Josephus, is forty furlongs in breadth, and in length an hundred, was, in the times of the Old Testament, called the "Sea of Chinnereth," Numb. xxxiv. 11.; but the writers of the New have given it three different appellations. For, as it is called the "Sea of Galilee" from the province of Galilee in general, so it is called the "Sea of Tiberias," from a town of that name standing on its western shore, and the "Lake of Genesareth," from that particular tract of Galilee which bounded it a great way on the western side. The lake lies upon a gravel, which makes its water both of a good colour and taste. It is softer than either fountain or river water, and withal so very cold, that it will not grow warm though set in the sun in the hottest season of the year. [This indeed is undoubtedly a fiction; but the lake has many attractions, for] the river Jordan runs through the midst of it, which stocks it with a great variety of fish, of a peculiar

taste and shape, not to be equalled in any other place. In short, it was a common saying among the Jews, that "God loved the Sea of Galilee more than any other sea;" which so far holds good, that this sea, above all others, was honoured with the Divine presence of our Blessed Saviour, while he dwelt at Capernaum, very frequently, and even once after he was arisen from the dead. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*.

‖ St Matthew and St Mark, in their relations of this transaction, are pretty uniform, but St Luke differs from them so widely, that interpreters have been at some pains to reconcile them. For, whereas the two former tell us, that these fishermen were "casting a net into the sea," St Luke informs us, that "they were gone out of their ships, and had washed their nets," besides some other variation in the manner of the call of the four apostles. But not to enter into a minute examination of particulars, we ought to consider, that some allowances are reasonable, and necessary to be made for the variation of circumstances in one historian, who makes it his business to recount matters distinctly, and at large; and in another, whose intention it is only to declare facts in general, without entering into the series and order of each action. Now, this is the case of the two former evangelists: They designed no more than a summary account of these four apostles' call, and their compliance with it; and therefore they contented themselves with setting down apart, so much, first, as relates to Andrew and Peter, and afterwards, what related to James and John. But St Luke, who purposes to shew the manner and whole process of the call, records the miracle at large, and interweaves several remarkable passages, which were not needful to be mentioned in the brief account of St Matthew and St Mark. but highly conducive to St Luke's purpose of undertaking to describe the miraculous draught of fishes, (Luke v. 10.) which, upon our Lord's command to make a fresh experiment, was taken. *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. iii.

partners in the other ship to come to their assistance, because the draught was such that it loaded both the vessels so very deep that they were in some danger of sinking before they got to shore.

Amazed at this marvellous sight, and dreading the visible appearance of so great and so Divine a power just by him, Peter threw himself down at our Saviour's feet, desiring him to † depart from him, because he was a person no ways worthy of his presence. But our Saviour bid him be of good comfort, and, from the present incident, took occasion to inform him that he had a nobler work and employment for him, even the †² gaining of mens souls to salvation, if he would adjoin himself to him; and having given the like invitation to the other three, Andrew, James, and John, they all obeyed his call, and leaving their vessels, nets, relations, and employment, †³ became, ever after, his constant and inseparable disciples.

After the choice of these four disciples, our Saviour returned with them into the city; and on the next Sabbath-day went into the chief synagogue, and there preached to the people, with so much force and authority, and in a manner so widely different from their usual teachers the scribes †⁴, that all were astonished at him; and to increase

From the Beginning of the Gospels to Matth ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke xi 1.

† We have several instances, both in the Old and New Testament, of persons struck with dreadful apprehensions at the presence of the Divine Majesty, or even of some angel, or a prophet delivering a message from him. And therefore Grotius supposes, that Peter's case was much the same with that of the widow of Sarepta, when she complained to Elijah, "What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God; art thou come unto me to call my sins to remembrance?" 1 Kings xvii. 18. But others more justly think, that Peter's words are expressive, rather of his high sentiments of our Lord, and the consciousness of his own unworthiness to be found in such a person's company, and that therefore, they do not a little resemble that glorious declaration of the centurion in the gospel, "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof, but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed," Matthew viii. 8. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Pool's Annotations*.

†² The words in our translation are, "From henceforth thou shalt catch men," but in the Greek ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν ἀνθρώπους ἵνα ῥαγάσῃς, there is something very remarkable. For it does not say, that Peter should catch men, as people generally do wild beasts or fishes, in order to kill them, and eat them; but that he should take them alive, as such fish and wild creatures are taken that are designed to be put in fish-ponds or in parks: and therefore the sense of the word is, "Thou shalt be a fisher of men," but such a fisher as shall preserve them alive; as shall retrieve them, in short, from error, and ignorance, and death; and conduct them to truth, and knowledge, and eternal life. *Hammond's Paraphrase*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

†³ Towards the conclusion of the first chapter of St John's Gospel, we meet with a call of some five of our Lord's disciples, about a year prior to this; but, by the account of the other evangelists, it appears that they did not, at this time, become our Saviour's constant attendants, because it is presumable, that though he took this opportunity to make himself known to them, yet he had not as yet any immediate occasion for them, and therefore remitted them to their respective trades.

Only Philip is supposed to have retained to him from the very first, because he seems to have called him in a formal manner, as he did not, at that time, the rest, John i. 43. and because we find no farther interview between him and Philip, upon this score, as there was between him and three, at least, of the rest, Luke v. 10, 11. These three disciples therefore, viz. Andrew, Peter, and John, were twice called; but the former calling was rather a warning to hold themselves in readiness for it, than an actual engaging them in his service; but now in Philip, we meet with no other call than what he had at first, and therefore, though the fathers and some ancient writers have given the honour to St Andrew of being the first disciple, yet that prerogative is evidently St Philip's. For though Andrew and Peter were the first that came and conversed with our Lord, yet we find them returning to their trades again, and not ordained to their discipleship till after the time that the Baptist was cast into prison. *Beausobre's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Howell's History*, book ii. in the Notes.

†⁴ There are several opinions wherein the excellency of Christ's preaching above that of the Jewish doctors did consist. Some think that his teaching was not so much in the manner of an instructor as a legislator, and one who, in his own name, had power to propound the terms of life and death. But though this, in relation to Christ's Divinity, be certainly true, yet it is not so agreeable either to his prophetic office or his frequent declarations, "that the doctrine which he taught was not his own, but his who sent him; and that he spake not of himself, but as his Father had commanded him," John vii. 16. and xi. 51. Others imagine, that the excellency of Christ's preaching consisted in the miracles wherewith he confirmed his doctrine; for so the evangelist represents the matter: "They all marvelled, saying, What new doctrine is this? For with authority he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they obey him," Mark i. 27. But because another evangelist tells us that it was his doctrine, without his miracles, that astonished the people, Matth. vii. 29. others are of opinion that his

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their admiration, one in the congregation, whose body was possessed with an unclean spirit †, cried out in an hideous manner, "Let us alone, what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? †² I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God." But Jesus, who wanted the testimony of no such confessors, commanded his silence and departure out of the poor man's body; which immediately was done, to the great surprise and amazement of all the spectators.

From the synagogue our Lord retired to Peter's house, where his wife's mother lay sick of a fever; but upon his approaching the bed-side, and taking her by the hand, he commanded the fever †⁵ to depart; and that moment restored her to such perfect health, that immediately she arose and (as if she had never been sick) waited on the company. This, and the other miracle in the synagogue (as soon as the sun was set, and the Sabbath ended), gathered all the city together (about Peter's house, bringing demoniacs ||

excellency lay in the graceful and lively manner of his delivery, not like the teachers of the Jews, who read their lectures of the law so coldly, so perfunctorily, as never to affect the hearts of their hearers; and that, in short, he spake as a prophet who had a full commission from God to deliver his message to them; not as the Scribes, who pretended only to deliver the traditions of their forefathers. *Whitby's* and *Pool's* Annotations.

† Those who are minded to depreciate our Saviour's miracles, will need persuade us, that the Jews, having a notion that the diseases whose symptoms they could not account for, were inflicted by devils, whom God might employ to chastise mankind, did therefore give the name of evil spirits to several distempers which proceeded merely from natural causes; that of these distempers, such as had any thing loathsome or nauseous attending them, they generally called by the name of an unclean spirit; and that because sepulchres, of all other places, were reputed the most polluted, therefore, whenever any crazy or melancholic people took it in their heads to frequent such places, that they were always said to be possessed with such spirits. See *Beausobre's* Annotations in Matth. iv. 24. and x. 1. But how groundless this whole hypothesis is, we shall take occasion to shew at large in our answer to the objections belonging to this chapter.

†² It may justly be made a question, whether the devil who possessed this man did actually know our Saviour to be the Son of God, as he pretended. There are two evangelists who relate this miracle; and in the conclusion of it, both tell us that our Saviour "suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him to be Christ," Mark i. 34. Luke iv. 41. But notwithstanding this, some interpreters do not scruple to affirm the contrary, viz. that the devil had no perfect perception of our Lord's Divinity until his resurrection from the dead. The state of humiliation which he chose, the obscurity which he lived in, and the persecutions which he suffered, without ever employing his power to redress them; the care which he took to conceal his most renowned actions, and to refer the glory of them all to God alone, deceived the devil and kept him in suspence. For had he known Jesus, say they, he would never have put

it into the heart of Judas to betray, or of the Jews to crucify him, since this was the proper way to accomplish man's redemption. But the answer to this is obvious,—That though the devil did know Jesus to be the Messiah, yet he did not know the mystery of man's redemption. When he first essayed our Lord in his temptations, he spake indeed in a different manner, "If thou be the Son of God;" but by his defeat he soon perceived that his antagonist was more than man. Though therefore he perfectly knew him to be the Son of God, yet seeing him invested with our nature, he might very likely be so far infatuated as to think, that by destroying his humanity, he might possibly defeat God's great design. For how sublime soever we may suppose his intellectual faculties to be, yet the wonderful work of man's salvation by the death of Christ, the apostle plainly tells us, is what no finite understanding could comprehend, until "God was pleased to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which, from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, to the intent that now, unto principalities, and powers in heavenly places, might be known, by the church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," Eph. iii. 9, &c. *Cabmet's* Commentary.

†³ Fevers are common distempers, and very often cured by ordinary means, so that the nature of this miracle did not lie in the cure of an incurable disease, but in the manner of the cure, which was with a touch; the suddenness of it; her fever immediately left her; and the perfectness of it, in that she was able to rise and wait on the company. This is said to be Peter's wife's mother; and from hence it may be presumed, that Peter, who was himself of Bethsaida, had married a woman of Capernaum, and there lived with his mother-in-law. *Pool's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

|| This plainly shews that the curing of diseases, and the casting out of devils, were two distinct things, and consequently the error of those who, in their annotations upon the very texts where they are mentioned separately, endeavour to persuade us that the devils cast out were only diseases. *Whitby's* Annotations.

and diseased people of all kinds, and begging the relief of this heavenly physician, who very readily cured them all by a touch only, or the imposition of his hand.

The next morning he retired very early into a private place, that, being free from the noise and importunities of the multitude, he might have an opportunity to pray: But even in his solitude he was found out; and therefore, to disengage himself from such a croud of attendants, he told his disciples, that the purport of his mission was to preach the Gospel in other neighbouring cities; and therefore, leaving Capernaum, he made a progress into Galilee, preaching in their public synagogues, curing all kinds of distempers, and dispossessing all demoniacs that were brought to him.

In his progress through Galilee he met with a man overspread with a foul leprosy †, whom, upon his humble petition, with one touch †² he immediately healed, but at the same time †³ gave strict charge not to discover it to any one until he had presented

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

† A leprosy was a distemper very common among the Jews. It proceeded from a general corruption of the blood and juices; rendered the person tainted with it extremely loathsome and deformed; and, in hot countries especially, was of all distempers the most spreading in the body, and the most contagious to others. But then, with regard to the notions of the Jews, and their law concerning it, it was still more detestable. It separated the person infected with it from all civil and religious communion. It distinguished him by all the outward significations of sorrow and shame. It was generally looked upon as a plague inflicted by God for some enormous crime. It was thought so far above the power of art, that the very attempt to cure it by medicine was esteemed an impious presumption. In short, it was dreaded as the highest of legal pollutions, and required a great variety of lustrations, before the patient could be restored to the privilege of a Jew, Levit. xiii. *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. ii.

†² But how came our Saviour to run the hazard of making himself unclean, Levit. v. 3. by touching one that was manifestly so? Now, whatever the law concerning the leper's uncleanness might be, it seems as if the priest that officiated about him was not affected by it, because we find him directed to make so near an examination and inspection into his distemper, Levit. xiii. 14, &c. Aaron, we may observe, though he officiated about his sister Miriam in her leprosy, is not said to have contracted any pollution by it; and therefore well might a much greater high priest than Aaron, in virtue of his office, claim the same immunity. But then, in virtue of his divinity, it was impossible for him to incur any legal uncleanness: As therefore the effect wrought upon this leper was a plain demonstration that the finger of God was in it, and he consequently approved of the action; so the Jews make it a received rule, that a prophet might vary from and even change the ritual law: And from hence we may infer, that as Elijah and Elisha both might touch the dead children whom they raised to life again, without imputation of uncleanness, 1 Kings xvii. 19. and 2 Kings iv. 34. so might our Saviour touch this leper; though the opinion of some is, that he did not properly touch him as a leper, because the moment that he stretched out his hand the leprosy was cured: But if it were not, the observation of

Theophylact (in Luc. vii. 13.) still stands good, viz. "That our Lord might touch the leper, in order to shew that it was not necessary to observe those lesser matters of the law; that touching an unclean person did not defile one that was pure himself; and that the only thing indeed that did defile was the leprosy of the soul." *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*.

†³ If it be asked, why our Saviour should so often command the concealing his miracles? we may assign for reasons, not only his modesty and great humility, that there might be no appearance of ostentation in him, and that the Jews might have no pretence to accuse him of seeking his own glory, Matth. xii. 16. but because at this time it was not proper to irritate the Scribes and Pharisees (who had already made him quit Judea) too much. He knew, that in such a determinate space they would bring about what God in his counsel had decreed. In the mean time, "he was to work the works of him that sent him, while it was day," John ix. 4. and to propagate his Gospel, as much as possibly he could, both among the Jews and Gentiles; which could not have been so conveniently done, if the greatness of his miracles had once provoked the malice and envy of his enemies to make their utmost opposition against him. He knew likewise the mad and capricious humour of the multitude, and had reason to apprehend, "that they might come and take him away by force, and make him a king," John vi. 15. if all his miracles had been blazed abroad, before he had sufficiently instructed them in the spiritual nature of his kingdom. As therefore he was far from being a friend to popularity or sedition, he desired that several of his miracles might be suppressed, lest any bad consequences should attend the publication of them, until his own resurrection from the dead should be an undeniable proof and confirmation of all the rest. And this I take to be the reason of his referring the Pharisees, when they came to demand a sign of him, to that of the prophet Jonah, Matth. xii. 39. whereby he implied, that he would use no more means for their conviction, until, by the miracle of his resurrection, his Divine power, and the completion of the ancient types and prophecies, should be so clearly manifested as to leave them without all excuse. *Calmet's Commentary*, *Beausobre's* and *Hammond's Annotations*.

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† himself before the priest, and offered the sacrifice that was appointed for a testimony †² of his cure: But the poor man, out of the abundance of his joy, could not refrain from publishing it abroad wherever he came, which still increased our Saviour's fame, so that he avoided returning openly into the city of Capernaum, lest the multitude of his followers should give some umbrage to the state; and therefore having finished his progress through Galilee, (which lasted for almost three months), he retired into a desert place, and there employed some part of his time in prayer.

Upon leaving his retirement he went privately into Capernaum, but it was not long before he was discovered; and as soon as he was, such vast crowds were gathered together to hear his sermons, and to bring their diseased for cure, that the house where he was, and all the court-yard about it, were not sufficient to contain them. In the house were many great persons, Pharisees, and doctors of the law, from Jerusalem and Judea, as well as Galilee, who, led thither by their curiosity, sat hearing his discourses and observing his miracles, when four men came bearing a paralytic †³ on his bed; but finding it impossible to pass through the throng, they adventured to uncover the house ||, and to let down the sick man, bed and all, into the very room where he was sitting.

† The priesthood, at this time, was much degenerated from its primitive institution, and many human rites and ordinances were added to God's law concerning the priest's examination of the leper who pretended to be clean; and yet our Lord sent this leper to submit to all these new invented ceremonies, as knowing, that though they did indeed corrupt, yet they did not extinguish the Divine institution. The Divine institution was no more than this,—That when a leper was cured, he was to appear at the city gate, and the priest was to examine whether he was truly healed or no; that if he was, the priest received him into the city, and by degrees into the temple, whither he should bring two clean birds of any kind (the marginal note says sparrows), and having made a bunch of cedar and hyssop mixed together, should tie them with a scarlet ribbon made of wool; that to this bunch of cedar and hyssop one of these birds should be fastened alive, and the other killed by the leper that was cured, and its blood received in a vessel filled with water; that, when this was done, the priest should take the bunch with the live bird, and having dipped both in the water, tinged with the blood of the other bird, should seven times sprinkle the leper with it; and that after this the live bird should be let loose to flee where it would, and the person, thus healed and purified, should again be admitted to the society of the healthy, and communion in religious offices, Levit. xiv. 1, &c. *Whitby's* and *Hammond's* Annotations.

†² Various are the senses of the words *a testimony to them*; for they may signify, that the gift or oblation, which the leper was to carry, would be a means to evince the perfection of his cure, when the priests had examined and admitted it as such; that this would likewise be an evidence to the people who stood at that time and saw him cured, when they should hear that the priests had pronounced him clean; a proof to the priests, that himself was an observer of the law, by requiring his patient to comply with the ceremonies of it; and a full demonstration that he was a prophet come from God, since they themselves owned that a

leprosy could only be cured by the finger of God. *Beausobre's*, *Hammond's*, and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†³ The word comes from *παράλιν*, which signifies to *resolve* or *relax*, and seems to imply that this distemper is a relaxation of the nerves, though it sometimes proceeds from other causes. It is always attended with great weaknesses and obstructions of the blood and juices, which deprive the limbs of their motion, and sometimes occasion great pain. The distemper is reckoned above the power of all medicines to remove; and yet our Saviour cured it several times merely by a word's speaking. *Pool's* Annotations.

|| But how could they possibly uncover the house, when they could not so much as get to it, much less get upon it, by reason of the throng that was before the door? Now to have a right notion of this matter we must observe, that the houses in Judea were, for the most part, even as they are to this day, (*Sandy's Travels*, page 36.) low built, and flat roofed, and surrounded with a battlement about breast high, according to God's own injunction, Deut. xxii. 8. so that to go up to the top of their houses the Jews had two ways; one by a pair of stairs within the house, leading up to the trap-door which lay even with the roof; and the other on the outside of the house, by a ladder, or pair of stairs rather, either fixed or moveable, by which they could ascend to the roof when they pleased, without ever going into the house itself. Since this then was the general fashion of Jewish houses, we need not doubt but that this at Capernaum was of the same figure and make; and therefore the bearers of the paralytic, finding that they could not come at the door by reason of the crowd, bethought themselves of another expedient; they went round a private way, and coming to the stairs which stood on the outside of the house, up these they carry him, and presently gain the top. But finding the trap door (or way of the roof as the Jews call it) shut against them, immediately they go to work, and forcing it open, (which St Mark calls uncovering or breaking up the roof, chap. ii. 4. because the door which lay

Our Blessed Saviour, being not a little pleased with such an instance † of their faith and reliance on his mercy, was resolved to cure the man; and accordingly in the first place he gave him an absolution †² from his sins. This provoked the indignation of the Scribes and Pharisees, as deeming him guilty of blasphemy †³, because none (as they imagined) could forgive sins but God alone. But he, knowing their secret thoughts, first reproved their censoriousness, and then, by curing the patient before them, plainly demonstrated what authority he had to forgive sins. For though the power of healing be much inferior to that of forgiving sins; yet because it is not so easy to impose a cure upon the world where mens senses are witnesses, as remission of sins, which is a secret and invisible operation; therefore all the people who were convinced by their eyes of the efficacy of Christ's last words, "rise and walk", were satisfied of the truth of the former, "thy sins are forgiven thee." And accordingly they glorified the Almighty who had manifested such power on earth, and being filled with reverential fear, declared, that "they had seen strange and wonderful things that day."

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

While our Lord continued at Capernaum he went out one day (as frequently he did) to the lake side, and finding one Matthew †⁴, otherwise named Levi, the son of Alphaeus a

even with the roof, when let down and shut, was reputed a part of it), they conveyed him down that way, which St Luke calls letting him down through the tiling, i. e. through the roof, which (except where the door was) was all paved with large tiles, and by this means they found it no difficult matter "to place him in the midst before Jesus." *Calmet's Com. and Pearce's Vindication of our Saviour's Miracles.*

† Some have supposed, because the history makes no mention of any faith but that of the friends and bearers of this impotent man, that therefore the patient himself had no part in that virtuous disposition which inclined our Saviour to compassionate him; and thence they infer how far a man may be benefited by the faith and intercessions of others in his behalf. But it is a mistake to think that the words *their faith* exclude that of the sick person: For had he not been persuaded that Christ was able to cure him, he would never have suffered himself to be presented to him, in a method so troublesome to his weak condition. We read indeed of no petition that he made to our Lord, but the violence of his distemper might possibly have deprived him of the use of speech; or if it had not, the very spectacle of a body so debilitated, the manner of the action, and the fatigue which he must have undergone in it, all spake for him, and carried a more moving eloquence than it was possible for any tongue to utter. *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. iii.

†² The Jews were of this persuasion;—That every disease of the body (those especially which were of a grievous nature) were sent upon men for the punishment of their sins; and though they might carry this maxim too far, John ix. 3. yet sure it is, that the Scriptures represent most of the calamities of life as the natural effect of mens iniquities. And therefore some have observed, that as the word *sins* is frequently put for the *punishment* of sins, our Saviour's forgiving the man's sins was no more than a declaration of his intention to cure his distemper: Whereas it is plain that our Saviour speaks of them as two distinct things, when he puts the question to the company, "Whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven

thee? or to say, Take up thy bed and walk?" Mat. ix. 5. *Whitby's Annotations.* [It is strange that our author should have attributed to *Whitby* the doctrine which he seems here desirous to establish. That our Blessed Lord could, even on earth, forgive the future punishment of sin, no Christian will call in question; but Dr Whitby has proved, with the force of demonstration, that our Lord's intention here extended no farther than to remove from the paralytic what the Jews in general, and probably the man himself, believed to be the *temporal* consequences of his sin. When he said "thy sins be forgiven thee," he meant to be understood as removing the cause of the disease, which implied in it a removal of the effect.]

†³ This word, in heathen writers, signifies no more than slander, or calumny, or opprobrious language of any kind, such as tends to impair a man's good name; but in the sacred style it means unworthy and injurious talk concerning God's nature or attributes; as when we ascribe unto him such qualities as belong not to him, or rob him of those that do; ascribe to him the infirmities of man; or to man the perfections of God. This is the nature of the sin; and the punishment of it, under the law, was stoning without the gates of the city, Lev. xxiv. 15, 16. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†⁴ Grotius, and those that follow him, are of opinion, that the Levi mentioned Luke v. 27. is not the same with Matthew in Matth. ix. 9. because Matthew never calls himself Levi, nor does Mark or Luke ever call Levi Matthew. But the answer to this has long since been given by St Jerom, in Matth. ix. 9. viz. that the other two evangelists (as their charity and good nature became them) endeavour to cover the infamy of their brother's former way of life, and therefore never call him the publican, "lest they should seem to reproach him with the remembrance of his former conversation," but speak of him under his other name; though he, out of his great humility, in the Gospel written by himself, does not only take the more commonly known name of Matthew, but adds that odious title likewise of Matthew the publican. Since then the custom of having more names

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rich publican, sitting in his office, he asked him to be one of his disciples, who immediately † forsook his gainful employment, and afterwards became both an apostle and evangelist. Within a few days after his conversion, Matthew invited our Saviour and his disciples, and among others some of the profession which he had forsook, to a feast. The Scribes and Pharisees (who accounted all in a manner sinners besides themselves, but more especially these * publicans) began to expostulate with these disciples how it came to pass that their master, who set himself up for a preacher of righteousness, and a reformer of others, came to be so intimate with these lewd and lost wretches, as to sit and eat with them at the same table: but when our Saviour undertook the argument, he gave so fair an account of the reasons for his conversing with these people, as made the very objection †² become his apology. But all this would not content the Pharisees, and therefore joining with some of John's disciples that were then present, they came and demanded of him, why it was that his disciples observed no fasts, when ‡ they and John's disciples were known to keep many? To which he replied, "That it

than one is known to have prevailed among the Jews; and as St Mark calls him Levi, the son of Alphaeus, so Matthew, in all church history, is said to be the son of one of the same name; and since the history of the person, called Levi in Mark and Luke, agrees so exactly with what is said of him, who in the other evangelist is called Matthew, that there is not one circumstantial difference to be perceived, we cannot but conclude that this Matthew and Levi were one and the same person. *Whitby's* Annotations, and *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

† The old enemies of our religion, Julian and Porphyry, accused Matthew of folly and inconsiderateness in following a man whom he knew nothing of. But St Jerom's reply is,—That he could not want a sufficient knowledge both of our Saviour's doctrine and miracles before his call. The publicans, we find, were great frequenters of the synagogues, and other places where our Saviour taught, and of all others expressed the greatest eagerness to be instructed by him; and therefore, if Matthew was of the same disposition, he could not want opportunities of being acquainted with our Saviour's preaching, and of the wonderful works which he did every where, but more especially at Capernaum. It is very probable therefore, that Matthew, upon such conviction, was inclinable to become one of our Saviour's disciples even before he asked him: but if he was not, the lustre and majesty of the divinity hid under the manhood, but shining conspicuously in the face of Jesus Christ, was enough to attract every one that he cast his eyes upon; at least that powerful impulse which he, to whom all hearts are open, knew how to inject into Matthew's breast, could not fail to do it: and from this supernatural movement doubtless it chiefly was, that so readily, and without the least hesitation, he left all and followed Christ. *Calmet's* Commentary.

* Nor was it only among the Jews, but among the Heathens likewise, that the name of a publican was infamous. For according to their writers, they were accounted no better than thieves and cheats: Free violence, and unpunished rapine, and shameless covetousness, were their public profession. Πάντες τιλάνες πάντες ἰσὶν ἀπειρηγες, was the saying of the poet; and it is said of Theocritus, that being asked, which was

the cruellest among the beasts? His reply was, that, "of those in the mountains, the bear and the lion, but of those in the city, the publicans and sycophants. *Whitby's* and *Hammond's* Annotations.

†² The arguments which our Saviour uses to the Pharisees for his keeping company with publicans and sinners are these three: 1st, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick," Matth. ix. 12. by which he intimates to them, that in conversing with such sort of persons, he was about the discharge of his proper business; and that as a physician's profession did sometimes call him among patients that had the most virulent distempers; so he, whose office it was to heal souls, ought not to refuse his assistance to those whose circumstances most of all wanted his help and advice. 2d, God's saying in the prophet Hosea, chap. vi. 6. "that he would have mercy," meaning thereby all the kind offices, whereby we promote our neighbour's advantage, "rather than sacrifice," i. e. the rites and ordinances of the ceremonial law; whereby he taught them, that though these latter might, in their due place or season, be acceptable to God, yet charity to the souls of men (which was the highest act of mercy, and that wherein he was then employing himself) was much more esteemed by him. 3d, That "he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," or that the great design of his appearance in the world was, to change the corrupt manners and dispositions of men; a change which the righteous, standing less in need of it, should no more grudge the opportunities of to sinners, than the healthful ought to think themselves disparaged when the physician forbears the visits to them which he makes to the sick. Some commentators however have observed in this last argument a severe irony, and thus they expound it; "I am not come to cure those that think themselves well, nor to save those that account themselves righteous, as you Pharisees seem to do; but I am come to cure those who find themselves sick, and are sensible of the burden of their manifold iniquities, as these publicans seem to be." *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv. and *Calmet's* Commentary.

‡ Besides the public fasts appointed by the church the Pharisees in general did fast two days every week,

was not the proper season for the † friends of the bridegroom to fast and afflict themselves, while they had the bridegroom's company, but when they were deprived of it; and that it would be as imprudent and preposterous a thing to impose rigorous austerities upon his disciples, (who were but novices in religion, and inured to another way of life) 'as it would be to sew a piece of new cloth upon a rotten garment, which upon any stress would make the rent worse, or to put new wine †² into old leathern bottles; which upon the least fermentation would both burst the bottles and destroy the liquor;' for see the prevalence of custom, and how difficult it is to change an inveterate habit, for as much as (α) none having drank old wine desireth new; for he saith the old is better."

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

THE OBJECTION.

"**MEN** that take matters upon content, and read histories without ever examining into them, may perhaps imagine that the evangelists have given us a fair and rational account of our Saviour's doctrine and miracles, without incurring any of the absurdities or inconsistencies that are so manifest in other writers; but, if we take a nearer inspection of the books that have descended to us under their names, we shall find them relating such incredible stories, so frequently mistaken in matters of fact, so generally misapplying passages in the prophets, so inconsistent with themselves, and so contradictory to one another, that some of the objections which Jewish or heathen infidels have advanced against them, have not been thought groundless or insignificant.

and those of more strictness than ordinary, four. The disciples of John too, who was himself a man of such abstinence, that our Saviour says of him, he "came (comparatively) neither eating nor drinking, Matth. xi. 18. did no doubt, in a great measure, follow the example of their master; and now that he was confined in prison, might very probably double their fasts and their prayers to God for his deliverance. And if they and the Pharisees were able to do this, why should the disciples of Christ be deemed insufficient? Now, to this it may be answered, that among the Jews there were not only the sects of the Essenes and Pharisees, who led an austere life, but also schools of the prophets, many of whom were Nazarites, and consecrated to the service of God; and that besides these, the Jews had likewise academical and private schools, from whence might come disciples to John, and the Pharisees already trained up to fasting and penance, and other severe duties of religion. But now it is certain that the disciples of our Lord were chosen from their fishing trade, and so came to him wholly unacquainted with, and unfitted for these austerities, which to impose upon them now was not necessary, because his continuance among them was not to be long, and after his departure they would have occasion more than enough to exercise these, and many more painful duties, in the propagation of the gospel, and the persecutions which should attend it.

Whitby's Annotations.

† The Baptist, in his discourse to his disciples, had compared our Saviour to a bridegroom, and himself to his friend or chief guest, John iii. 29.; and therefore, as our Saviour designedly makes use of the same allusion, his argument runs thus,—“I am the bridegroom, and my church is my bride; as long as I am here, lasts the marriage-feast, and my disciples are the children or friends of the bridegroom, and so are not to mourn, but to rejoice with me while this time lasts: but at my death and departure, this bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then it will be time for them to fast and mourn.” *Whitby's Annotations.*

†² The bottles which were in use in the east, and at this time are very common in other countries, were not made of glass as ours are, but were certain bags made of goats skins, being well pitched and sewed together. They are very good vessels to preserve wine, oil, or any other liquor in; and in this respect more especially very convenient to carry from place to place, because, fall they never so often, they will not break unless they be very old or decayed. In which sense, our Saviour compares his disciples, before the descent of the Holy Spirit upon them, to old bottles, because they were not capable either of comprehending or practising all that perfection which he came into the world to teach mankind. *Calmet's Commentary.*

(α) Luke v. 39.

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For what a lamentable thing is it, that the two evangelists, Matthew (a) and Luke, (b), in deducing our Saviour's lineage, should almost in every article disagree and thwart one another; or, (were it possible to reconcile them) that they should both make their pedigrees terminate in Joseph, who was no more than the reputed father of Jesus, and not in Jesus himself, as born of the Virgin Mary, from whom alone he had his human nature, and whose genealogy in this case was only to be regarded? What a plain contradiction is it that St Matthew (c) should introduce our Lord as affirming to his disciples that Elias was already come in the person of John the Baptist; and St John (d) put it in the mouth of the Baptist to assert the very contrary, which he certainly would not have done had he been the person predicted by the (e) prophet? And what a sad mistake in point of chronology, that St Luke should make the taxation, appointed by Augustus, which happened before our Saviour's birth, fall out when Cyreneus was governor of Syria, though (according to the account of all other historians) he did not succeed Quintilius Varus in that government, (f) till about twelve years after.

Isaiah makes mention indeed of a virgin's (g) conceiving and bearing a son, which St Matthew (h) has applied to the conception and birth of our Blessed Saviour; but as the word *Alma*, used by the prophet, does not necessarily denote a *virgin*, but sometimes a *young woman*, that has had knowledge of man; there is reason to believe, that it should bear this signification when referred to the mother of Jesus, because it is difficult to imagine how a woman should conceive and bear a son, and still preserve her virginity. And indeed, if this be not the proper acceptation of the word, we can hardly assign any reason why our Saviour should make choice of a woman to be his mother, who was betrothed and married to a man, rather than a pure virgin who had no such engagements upon her.

Whoever looks into the writings of the prophets, must observe, that all along down from the time of David, the Messiah is foretold under the character of a very powerful prince, who was to reign 'over the house of Jacob for ever;' and therefore it is absurd to put the Son of Mary (who was born meanly, lived poorly, and died ignominiously) upon the world for that person who is represented as one of the most glorious Kings that ever was, or ever shall be, in the universe. It is absurd to tell us, that the 'fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily,' and yet to relate the story (i) of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him; unless we can suppose that this accession of the third person in the Trinity could enable him to do more than the Divinity which always resided in him: but much more absurd is it, upon the like supposition, to talk of (k) his being tempted by the devil, when the devil, if he knew him, would not have dared to do it; and if he did not, the Divinity wherewith he was armed must have made him impregnable to all his assaults; so that the only end of this transaction must have been to shew, that God was able to sustain and overcome the temptations of the devil.

Miracles are generally supposed to be the manifestation of this Divinity residing in our Saviour, and the curing of demoniacs is always accounted one of the greatest of this kind; but as it is difficult to assign any reason why demons at this time were more numerous in Judea than in any country we ever read of, we have reason to think, that the persons represented in the New Testament as demoniacs, were only such as were afflicted with strange diseases, fits of the mother, convulsions, falling-sickness, and the like; which the sacred penmen (according to the idiom of the Hebrew language) express in this awful manner.

The first miracle that our Saviour did, was his turning water into wine at a marriage-feast. But how he who is all along represented as a very grave and sedate person, should

(a) Luke i. 1.
(e) Mal. iv. 5, 6.
(g) Chap. vii. 14.

(b) Chap. iii.
(f) Josephus's Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 1. and Prideaux's Connection, part ii. lib. ix.
(h) Chap. i. 22, 23.
(i) Matth. iii. 16.

(c) Chap. xvii. 11, 12.
(d) Chap. i. 21.
(k) Chap. iv. 1.

vouchsafe his presence at a wedding, which is usually a scene of levities and excess; how he came to give his mother so rough and undutiful an answer, that interpreters have been at some trouble to put a tolerable construction upon it; and, above all, how he came to supply the company, which had already drunk enough, with such a large quantity of wine as almost denotes him an encourager of intemperance,—are points that the evangelists have left to the perverse conjectures of unbelievers.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

The completion of prophecies, in the person and actions of our Blessed Lord, is certainly (a) a strong evidence of his being the Messiah; but in the application which the evangelists make of several of these, their scope is commonly so perverted, their words so corrupted, and their sense so wrested from its plain and obvious meaning; such shreds and loose sentences are culled out for this purpose, as have no manner of relation to the Messiah, but such as had received their completion in some other person many ages before; and upon every pinch, such figurative and mystical interpretations, as quite expound away the true importance of the prophecies, are fled to for shelter, that all that the Gospel writers seem to have done upon this head, is only to impose upon the world by a parcel of citations, and applications of prophecies, which, upon examination, will be found nothing to the purpose.

(b) St Matthew, for instance (to name one evangelist for all), having given an account of the conception of the Virgin Mary, and the birth of Jesus, informs us, (c) ‘That all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Immanuel!’ But the words, as they stand in Isaiah, (d) relate to a young woman in the days of Ahaz, as appears by their context, and cannot, in any tolerable construction, have relation to the birth of our Saviour, whose name was not Immanuel, but Jesus.

The same evangelist informs us, that Jesus was carried into Egypt, from whence he returned after the death of Herod, (e) ‘that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, OUT OF EGYPT HAVE I CALLED MY SON,’ which words are no where to be found but in the prophet (f) Hosea; and yet, (g) according to their plain and obvious sense, they are no prophecy, but relate to a past action, viz. the conducting the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

Again, the same evangelist, (h) having given us the account of the slaughter of the children in Bethlehem, and in the coasts thereof, immediately subjoins, that ‘then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah (i) the prophet, saying, in Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not;’ whereas it is plain from the context, that this lamentation, in its primary sense, does not relate to the massacre of the children in Bethlehem, but to the ten tribes being carried away into captivity, and cannot, without manifest violence, be applied to the other.

Once more, the same evangelist, having given us a short account of the return and settlement of our Lord’s parents in the city of Nazareth, acquaints us farther, that the reason of their doing so was, (k) ‘that it might be fulfilled which is spoken by the prophet, HE SHALL BE CALLED A NAZARENE,’ which is directly forging a quotation upon us, because there is no one of the prophets that ever said or wrote any such thing. They no where tell us, that the Messiah was to dwell at Nazareth, nor can his dwelling at Nazareth, supposing they did, be any ground for his being called a Nazarene.

The place foretold by the prophet for his birth and habitation was Bethlehem, and thither the wise men were directed to repair; but now, what sort of persons these wise

(a) 2 Pet. i. 19.

(d) Chap. vii. 14. and Reasons.

(b) Collins’s Grounds and Reasons.

(e) Matth. ii. 15.

(h) Matth. ii. 17.

(f) Chap. xi. 1.

(i) Chap. xxxi. 15.

(c) Matth. i. 22, 23.

(g) Collins’s Grounds

(k) Matth. ii. 23.

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&c. or 5439.
Ann. Dom.
30, &c.
Vulg. Ær. 28.

men were, and from what part of the world they came, what kind of star that was which conducted them, and how they could know that it portended the 'birth of the King of the Jews;' how the justice and mercy of God can be assoiled in suffering so many harmless babes to be massacred at Bethlehem upon the account of Christ; or how Christ's conduct may be accounted for, in discovering himself so freely to the Samaritan woman, when he had all along given such strict charge to his apostles to conceal what they knew of his being the Messiah and Son of God;—these, and some other points in this period, the evangelists have given us no manner of satisfaction in, and have therefore left us at large, either to form conjectures of our own, or to call in question the truth of their narrations."

ANSWER.

THAT the evangelists were persons of too much probity to deal in lies, and "cunningly devised fables," is evident from their writings, wherein we find, not only the strictest prohibitions against guile and dissimulation, both in words and deeds, but such evident tokens of their "simplicity and godly sincerity," as shew that they would not be prevailed upon to conceal truth, even though it might tend to their lasting dishonour. For, let any one tell me, how they can be supposed capable of forging any thing for the advancement of their cause, (a) who have not been wanting to record the obscurity of their master's birth and life, the poverty and reproaches he endured in his ministry, the ignominy of his passion and death, and the terrors and agonies of his mind upon the approach of them; nay, who have not dissembled their own faults and failings, their mean extraction and employments, their ignorance and mistakes, their cowardly desertion of their Lord, and many unsuccessful attempts to convert others by their preaching. Men, that were thus frank and open in their proceedings, could never designedly palm any falsehoods upon the world; and if they were mistaken in some passages, it must be esteemed their misfortune, not their crime.

They were indeed illiterate men all, except St Luke, and brought up in mean employments; so very mean, that we cannot suppose them capable of writing a regular history of any kind, had they not been directed in it by the Spirit of truth;* but then to frame such an excellent system of morality as is contained in the Gospels; to give such an extraordinary account of the satisfaction for sin, and of the nature and office of a Mediator; to feign the life and actions of a Messiah, which should agree so exactly with the predictions of the prophets, and the types and prefigurations of the Mosaic law; this they were no more able to do, without the assistance of the same Divine spirit, than they were to create a world: And yet, notwithstanding the great variety and difficulty of this Providence, it is wonderful to observe how all the four evangelists, who wrote at different times and in distant places, agree, not only in the main topics, but sometimes in the most minute circumstances, (b) insomuch, that whenever they seem to disagree, (which chiefly arises from their not confining themselves to the same words or the same order of time) it looks as if the Spirit of God designed on purpose that it should be so, not only that they might be distinct witnesses of the same things, but that all succeeding ages of the Christian world might see with their eyes, that they had neither transcribed from one another, nor combined together like crafty knaves.

(c) The truth is, though the evangelists no where contradict themselves or one another, yet they were not so solicitous to prevent their being suspected of doing so by injudicious and rash men, as they would have been, had they recorded any thing but truth; because it is suitable to the simplicity of truth, not to be over nice and curious about every punc-

(a) *Stanhope's Sermons at Boyle's Lectures.*

* [This is probably true. To write a regular history is no easy task; but St Matthew cannot have been utterly illiterate, as we find him at the receipt of custom.]

(b) *Grew's Cosmolog. sac. pag. 304.*

Christian Religion, vol. ii. c. 8.

(c) *Jenkins's Reasonableness of the*

tilio, and smaller circumstance, (as the manner of falsehood is) but to speak fully and intelligibly, and then leave it to men whether they will believe or not. Instead of criticising therefore upon some difficult parts of the evangelical writers, we ought to consider their whole design, method, and contrivance; and if in these we find them rational and uniform, the common candour of mankind will hinder us from thinking them capable of any gross mistakes or inconsistencies, and where we perceive the appearance of any such, put us upon the charitable office of adjusting and reconciling them.

From the beginning of the Gospels to
Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

There is indeed a great and uncommon difference between St Matthew and St Luke in their genealogies of our Saviour; but to accommodate this, we may observe, 1st, That these two evangelists were men of different nations, and in that respect had different designs. For (a) St Matthew was by birth a Jew, wrote his Gospel for the benefit of the Jewish converts, and wrote it very probably in their language: And, as he adhered to the received custom of the Jews in this matter of genealogy, he began his deduction no higher than Abraham, the father of the Hebrews: But St Luke was a Gentile, and may truly be called the evangelist as St Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles; and therefore when he comes to relate the pedigree of Jesus, he takes a different method, and carries it up as far as Adam, the father of all mankind.

2d, We may observe likewise, that St Matthew (b) intends only to set down our Lord's † political or royal pedigree, by which he had a right to the crown of the Jews; but St Luke shows his natural descent through the several successions of those from whom he took flesh and blood: And to this purpose we find St Matthew (as we said just now) beginning his reckoning only from Abraham, (c) to whom the first promise of the kingdom was made; whereas St Luke runs his line up to Adam, the first head and fountain of human nature; which plainly shows, that the one deduced only his title to the crown, and the other the natural descent of his humanity.

3d, We may observe farther, that as David had several sons by former wives, so by Bathsheba likewise he had three besides Solomon, whereof the eldest, next to him, was Nathan, and that Christ descended naturally from David, not by Solomon, but by Nathan: For though it be frequently said in Scripture that the Messiah should spring from David, it is never said that he should descend from Solomon; for which reason St Luke only deduces Nathan's line, which came into the possession of the throne (upon Jeconiah's captivity and want of issue) in the person of Salathiel.

4th, We may observe again, that the crown of Judah being now come into the line of Nathan in the person of Salathiel, and after him in the great and renowned Zorobabel; forasmuch as the two evangelists agree from Jeconiah to Zorobabel, and after him, divide (each ascribing to him a different successor, viz. the former Abiud, and the latter Rhesa) we may rationally suppose that these two were the sons of Zorobabel, and that from Abiud, the elder bother, lineally descended Joseph, according to the computation of St Matthew, and from Rhesa, the younger brother, descended Mary, of whom Jesus was born, according to the description of St Luke.

5th, Once more we may observe, that it was a custom of the Jews not to reckon the woman by name in her pedigree, but to reckon the husband in right of his wife; for which reason we are not to think it strange that we find Joseph twice reckoned, first in his own right by St Matthew, and then in his wife Mary's right by St Luke; for it

(a) Bishop Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, part ii. c. 14.

(b) South's Sermons, vol. iii.

† That St Matthew uses the word *begat* only in a political sense, is clear from hence:—That he applies it to him who had no child, even to Jeconiah, of whom it is expressly said, Jer. xxii. 30. that God "wrote him childless;" whereupon, being deposed by the king of Babylon, Zedekiah his uncle was made king, and afterwards, upon the removal of him like-

wise (there remaining no more of the line of Solomon) Salathiel being next of kin, was declared king of the Jews; which Salathiel upon that account is said by St Matthew, chap. i. 12. to have been begotten by Jeconiah, not because he was naturally his son, but only legally or politically so, as succeeding in the kingdom during Jeconiah's captivity. South's Sermons, vol. iii.

(c) Gen. xviii. 8.

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is certain, that Mary was properly the daughter of Eli, and that Joseph, who in the account succeeds him, is so reckoned, not as his natural son, but as his son-in-law, instead of his wife Mary, as the manner of the Jews was: And accordingly it is remarked by some learned men, that St Luke (*a*) does not say of Joseph that he was the son of Eli, but only *τὸν Ἠλὶ*, he *was of Eli*, i. e. related to him, and belonging to his family as his son-in-law. Fit however it was that the genealogy of Jesus should be deduced from Joseph, because it was so generally received by the Jews, that Jesus (*b*) was the son of the carpenter, (*c*) the son of Joseph; so that if Joseph had not been acknowledged to have been of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David, (*d*) since, according to the received rule of the Jews, that “the family of the mother is not called a family,” they would not have failed to have objected this as a just prejudice against all our Lord’s pretences of being the Messiah.

The sum of these observations, in short, is this,—(*e*) That the royal line of David by Solomon being extinct in Jeconiah, the crown and kingdom passed into the next younger line of Nathan (another son of David), in Salathiel and Zorobabel; which Zorobabel having two sons, Abiud and Rhesa, the royal dignity descended, of right, upon the line of Abiud, of which Joseph was the last; and he marrying the Virgin Mary, who sprung from the line of Rhesa, the younger son of Zorobabel, and (as some imagine) having no issue himself, his right passed into the line of Mary, being next of kin, and by that means upon Jesus her Son; so that he was both naturally the Son of David, and also legally the king of the Jews, the latter of which is accounted to us by St Matthew, as the former is by St Luke.

This seems to be a pretty clear deduction of our Saviour’s pedigree, and is capable of giving a fair solution to a great many of those objections which arise from the different names, or the unequal numbers in the names, or the unequal distances from each other, which are discernible in the two genealogies. But perhaps interpreters might save themselves the trouble of giving a reason for several difficulties occurring therein, by saying, that St Matthew (*f*) (concerning whom the main dispute is) recites his account as he found it in the authentic copies of the Jews, who doubtless in every family had preserved some known and approved genealogy of their descent from Abraham, the father of their nation, in whom they so much gloried, and from whose loins they expected the promised Messiah*.

(*a*) Chap. iii. 24.

(*b*) Matth. xiii. 55.

(*c*) John vi, 42.

(*d*) *Whitby’s* Annotations.

(*e*) *South’s* Sermons.

(*f*) Bishop *Kidder’s* Demonstration, part. ii. c. 14.

* [All this is very well, on the supposition that both the evangelists give the genealogy of Joseph—the reputed father of Jesus; but I have not a doubt but that this is a mistake, and such a mistake as has been the source of all the objections that have been urged against this part of the Gospel-history.

“There are, says Dr Hales, two distinct genealogies given in the introductions of *St Matthew’s* and *St Luke’s* gospels: the former principally designed for the *Jews*, traces Christ’s pedigree as the promised seed, down from *Abraham* to *David*, and from him through *Solomon’s* line, to *Jacob* the father of *Joseph*, who was the reputed or legal father of Christ, (*St Matt.* i. 1—16.) The latter designed for the *Gentiles* also, traces it upwards from *Heli* the father of *Mary*, to *David*, through his son *Nathan’s* line, and from *David* to *Abraham*, concurring with the former, and from *Abraham* up to *Adam*, who was the immediate ‘son of God.’ (*St Luke* iii. 23—38.)

That *Luke* gives the pedigree of *Mary*, the real mother of Christ, may be collected from the following reasons:—1. The angel *Gabriel*, at the annunciation, told the virgin, that ‘God would give her Divine Son the throne of *his father David*, (*St Luke* i. 32.); and this was necessary to be proved by her genealogy afterwards. 2. *Mary* is called by the *Jews* *בְּתוּלַת הֵלִי*, ‘the daughter of *Eli*’ (*Lightfoot* on *Luke* iii. 23.); and by the early Christian writers, the daughter of *Joakim* and *Anna*. But *Joakim* and *Eliakim* (as being derived from the names of God יְהוָה and אֵל *Jahoh* and *El*) are sometimes interchanged, as in 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 4. *Eli* therefore, or *Heli*, is the abridgment of *Eliakim*; nor is it of any consequence that the Rabbins call him *עֲלִי*, instead of *אֵלִי*, the aspirates *aleph* and *ain* being frequently interchanged. 3. A similar case in point occurs elsewhere in the genealogy. After the Babylonish captivity, the two lines of *Solomon* and *Nathan*—the sons of *David*—unite in the generations of *Salathiel* and *Zorobabel*, and thence diverge again in the sons of the latter, *Abiud* and *Resa*. Hence, as *Salathiel* in *St Matthew* was the son of *Jechoniah* or *Jehoiachin*, who was carried away into captivity by

That even in our Saviour's time, the Jews (*a*) had genealogical tables, wherein they kept an account of their families and tribes, is evident from what Josephus says, viz. (*b*) "That he gave the succession of his family, as he found it written in the public books;" nor need we question, but that the like or greater care was employed to preserve the stems of the royal family of David. Since then the Jews, who lived in the time when the Gospels were published (though exactly curious in things of this nature, and withal maliciously bent against Christ and Christianity), never once endeavoured to invalidate the account which these evangelists give us; this seems to be a sufficient proof, that these genealogies, when first they came abroad, were neither thought erroneous nor inconsistent, but agreeable to the public records then in use; and if any difficulties now arise in them, they are not to be attributed to any real and intrinsic cause, but accidentally to the ignorance of interpreters for want of proper helps, at this distance of time, whereby to explain them.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

It may seem a little incongruous perhaps, that the Baptist should deny what our Saviour confirms concerning him, viz. that he was the Elias who was to be sent before to make preparations for his coming; but in this there will be no manner of contradiction, if it does but appear that the affirmation of the one, and the negation of the other, proceed upon different considerations. Now the state of the matter is this,—The Jews at this time were in full expectation of the Messiah; but then it was an universal belief among them, that Elias should appear before him, and that this appearance should be a certain token of his coming. This belief they founded upon the prophecy of Malachi, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." But then they imagined, either that the body of Elijah was preserved in paradise, and should again appear upon earth at this season appointed for it, or that his body being dissolved, God would infuse the spirit of Elijah into a new one created for that purpose. When therefore the great council at Jerusalem sent to enquire of the Baptist whether he was either the Christ or Elias, now returned from heaven (as they imagined he was to do upon Christ's appearance), to this their sense of the question he replies, in express terms, That he was neither the one nor the other. But this does not at all interfere with our Lord's affirming, that he was the person foretold under the name and character of Elias, in the true signification of Malachi's prophecy. He was not indeed the very Elias who lived in king Ahab's time, of whose second coming into the world the Sanhedrim now enquired, according to their misconstruction of that prophecy; but according to the true construction thereof, he was the person who came in the spirit and power of Elias, of whom Elias was a type, and whose temper and manner of life Elias much resembled.

How usual a thing it is for persons, who resemble others in qualities, offices, or actions, to be described by the names * of those whom they resemble, no one can be ignorant, who is the least acquainted either with the phrase of Scripture or with the

Nebuchadnezzar, so, in *St Luke*, *Salathiel* must have been the grandson of *Neri*, by his mother's side. 4. The evangelist has himself critically distinguished the *real* from the *legal* genealogy, by a parenthetical remark: Ἰησοῦς—ὃν (ὡς ἐνομιζέτο) υἱὸς Ἰωσήφ [ἀλλ' ὄντως] υἱὸς τοῦ Ἡλίου. 'Jesus being (as was reputed) the son of *Joseph*, [but in reality] the son or grandson of *Heli*,' by the mother's side; for so should the ellipsis involved in the parenthesis be supplied." *Analysis of Ancient Chronology*, vol. 2. p. 699. This interpretation of the genealogy in *St Luke's Gospel*, if it be admitted, removes at once every difficulty; and it is so natural and consistent with itself, that, I think, it

can hardly be rejected, except by those who are determined, that "seeing they will not see, and hearing they will not understand."

(*a*) *Whitby's Annotations* on *Matth. i. 2.*

(*b*) *Chap. iv. 5.*

* Thus the poet calls *Turnus* another *Achilles*:

—Alius latio jam partus Achilles,

Natus et ipse Deâ.—

And elsewhere he uses the same liberty of speech:

Alter erit tum *Tiphys*, et altera, quæ vehat argo,

Delectos heroas; erunt etiam altera bella,

Atque iterum in *Trojam* magnus mittetur *Achilles*.

Virgil, Æn. vi. et Eclog. iv.

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&c. or 5439.
Ann. Dom.
30, &c.
Vulg. Ær. 28.

common forms of speech. Thus the Messias is promised by the name of David (*a*), because he was to be a king; Zadock the high priest and his sons are recorded by the name of Aaron and his sons, by reason of their office; and among us it is no uncommon thing to call the rich man a Croesus; the wise man a Solomon; the warrior a Cæsar, an Alexander, or the like. And where then, I pray, can be the misapplication in our Saviour's calling the Baptist by the name of Elias, when, in the severity of his life, his zeal for God's glory, his suffering persecution, his bold rebuking of vice, his reproofs of Herod, and the hatred of his incestuous queen, answerable to the prophet's chidings of Ahab, and the malice of Jezebel, he so nearly resembled the Tishbite? (*b*) He was not indeed the real Tishbite, but by the answer which he returns to these delegates from the Sanhedrim, (*c*) "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord," &c. he plainly intimates that he was the very messenger promised in Malachi, and came to discharge the office assigned to him in that prophet. So far is John's answer from contradicting what our Lord asserts of him, that it is indeed a confirmation of it.

The better to understand the nature of that taxation which St Luke (*d*) refers us to, we must observe, that every fifth year it was a customary thing to take an account of the citizens of Rome; for which purpose there were proper officers appointed who were called censors; (*e*) that their business was to make a registration of all the Roman citizens, their wives and children, with the age, qualities, trades, offices, and estates, both real and personal, of them all; that Augustus Cæsar was the first that extended this to the provinces, and three times in his reign, first, in the twenty-eighth year before the Christian era; secondly, in the eighth year before it; and, thirdly, in the fourteenth year after it, caused the like description to be made of all the provinces belonging to the Roman empire; and that this second enrolment, which was in the eighth year before the vulgar Christian era, i. e. three years before that, in which Christ was born, was the description to which St Luke refers us.

Now supposing the execution of Cæsar's decree in every province of the Roman empire to be committed to the governor of it; the carrying of this work through all the countries that made up the province of Syria, viz. through Syria, Cælo-Syria, Phœnicia, and Judea, could not well take up less than the space of three years; for if Joab (*f*) was nine months and twenty days in taking an account only (*g*) of the ten tribes of Israel, and in them only of such persons as were able to bear arms, we cannot think it unreasonable that the execution of the survey, which extended to all manner of persons, their possessions, qualities, and other circumstances, should, in so large a province, take up less than three years.

It is to be observed farther, that though the registration was made at this time, yet the taxes thereupon were not paid till Judea was made a Roman province, and Publius Sulpitius Quirinus (who in Greek is called Cyrenius) was made governor of Syria; for before Archelaus was deposed, the Jews paid their taxes to their princes, and their princes paid their tribute to the Roman emperors; but when Archelaus was deposed, and Judea made a Roman province, the tax was levied according to the valuation that was made eleven years before.

Upon the whole therefore it appears, that in this affair there were two distinct particular actions done at two distinct particular times, viz. first the making of the survey, and then the levying the tax thereupon; so that if what is said in Luke ii. 1. be understood of the former of these, and what is said in ver. 2. only of the latter, this will re-

(*a*) Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24.
Epistles and Gospels, vol. i.
deaux's Connection, part ii. lib. ix.

(*b*) *Kidder's* Demonstration, part ii. c. 16. and *Stanhope* on the
(*c*) Mark i. 3. (d) Chap. ii. 1. (e) *Pri-*
(*f*) 2 Sam. xxiv. 8. (g) 1 Chron. xxi. 6.

move all difficulties, and reconcile that evangelist with Josephus; and that it is to be thus understood we have the opinion of many learned interpreters.

The truth is, (a) this levy of the tax (which was settled eleven years before) in the time when Cyrenius was procurator of Syria, * was attended with so many commotions and seditious tumults, that the evangelist thought he could not make mention of its being decreed, without giving some hint of the manner of its being executed: And therefore he puts it in, by way of parenthesis, that (b) "this taxing was first made (i. e. first put in execution) when Cyrenius was governor of Syria *2."

There is a passage indeed in the prophet Isaiah which St Matthew applies to the birth of Jesus, yet, according to the context, it seems at first sight to have a more immediate reference to another event. But let us examine the history from whence it is taken. In the days of Ahaz, king of Judah, (and probably in the second or third year of his reign), Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, united their forces to come against Jerusalem: which put the king and his people in such consternation, (c) "that their hearts were moved (according to the Scripture expression) as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind." Hereupon Isaiah is commanded to take his little son Shear-jashub with him, and to go and meet Ahaz, in order to assure him that the design formed against him by the two confederate kings should not prosper: But finding no credence with the king, the prophet undertakes to perform whatever miracle he should ask, in confirmation of the truth of what he had promised him. Ahaz however

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

(a) *Beausobre's* Annotations.

* The account which Josephus gives us of this matter is this,—“Cyrenius, at this time, says he, was sent governor by Cæsar into Syria. He was a man of eminent fame, a Roman senator, and one that had passed through all the degrees and offices of honour up to the dignity of a consul. Coponius, who commanded the horse, went along with him as governor of Judea; but Judea being already annexed to Syria, it was Cyrenius's province to tax and cess the Jews, and to make seizure of the moneys and moveables of Archelaus. The Jews grumbled at this way of assessing at first, but through the persuasion and authority of the high priest Joazar, the son of Boethus, they were persuaded to submit and comply without any farther trouble, until one Judas, a Gaulanite, of the city of Gamala, together with one Sadducus a Pharisee, inveigled the people into a revolt. ‘Taxes, they said, were only marks of slavery, and therefore the whole nation should do well to stand up for an universal liberty; and one lucky hit would make them free and easy for ever, and advance them in their reputation, as well as secure them in their possessions.’ This was enough to put the multitude in tune for any sort of mischief; nor is it to be expressed the havoc these turbulent incendiaries made in the nation, and what murders, robberies, and depredations, without distinction of friend or foe, they committed, under the pretence of advancing the common good of liberty and property, when nothing but passion and private interest was at the bottom.” *Antiq.* lib. xviii. c. 4.

(a) Luke ii. 2.

* [If this solution of the difficulty be not satisfactory to the reader, he may have recourse to Dr Hales's *Analysis of Chronology*, vol. ii. p. 705, &c. That solution is too long to be inserted entire in this place, especially as the difficulty is of very little importance;

and to abridge it, would do it great injustice. It may be proper however to observe, that the learned author first gives an account of the occasion of the enrolment which took place at our Lord's birth; and after shewing, in historical detail, that Augustus had been induced to issue a decree enjoining it, which reduced the kingdom of Judea to a Roman province, by a false representation of Herod's conduct, proves completely that, on the case being fairly stated to him, he suspended the actual *operation* of the decree for eleven years; when Archelaus, Herod's son, was deposed, Judea really reduced to the state of a Roman province, and the decree issued so long before actually *carried into effect*. The passage in our version is this—“And it came to pass in those days, (i. e. a little previous to our Lord's birth) that there went a decree (*δύγμα*) that all the world should be *taxed* or *enrolled* (and this taxing was first *made* when Cyrenius was governor of Syria), and all went to be taxed—enrolled (*ἀπογραφῆσθαι*), every one in his own city.” In all the printed editions of the Greek New Testament, the first word in the paranthetical verse is *αὐτῇ*, and accordingly rendered, by our translators, *this*—“this taxing;” as if *αὐτῇ* were the feminine of *οὗτος*. “But in the most ancient manuscripts written in capitals and without points or accents, the word is, of course, *αὐτῇ*, and may be the feminine of *αὐτός*, signifying *self*; and if it be taken in this sense, as probably it ought to be, the whole passage should be translated thus:—“It came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all Judea (See Schleusner on the word *οἰκουμένη*) should be taxed (the taxing *itself* actually took place—*ἐγένετο*—was made, when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)” Why it was not made sooner, Dr Hales has perspicuously and satisfactorily shewn.]

(c) Isaiah vii. 2.

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still refusing, out of a specious pretence of not being willing to tempt God, the prophet turns from him, and addressing himself to the nobles of the royal blood, (a) "Hear ye now, O house of David, says he, the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

Now, not to insist upon the original word *alma* †, which (as (b) learned men have observed) signifies almost always *a virgin untainted by man*, and which the Greek translators before Christ (who were not interested in the controversy, and yet knew the signification of Hebrew words much better than any moderns can pretend to) have so rendered in this place; and not to insist on the tradition which prevailed among the Jews, not long before our Saviour's appearing, viz. that the Messiah should come into the world in such an extraordinary manner, that "no man should know whence he was," and (as the Talmud expresses it) "that his birth should be like the dew of the Lord, as drops from the grass, expecting not the labour or action of men;"—not to insist on these things, I say, (though they make very much for Christ's title to the prophecy,) (c) how can we imagine, that after so pompous an introduction, and so important a name, the prophet should mean no more at last by a virgin's conceiving, than that a young woman should be with child? What, does Isaiah offer Ahaz a miracle, either in the depth or in the height above? and when he seems to tell the house of David, that God, of his own accord, would perform a greater work than they could ask, does he sink to a sign that nature produces every day? Is that to be called a wonder (which word implies an uncommon, surprising, and supernatural event) which happens constantly by the ordinary laws of generation? How little does such a birth answer the solemn apparatus which the prophet uses to raise their expectation of some great matter? "Hear ye, O house of David,—behold, the Lord himself will give you a sign," worthy of himself. And what is it? why, a young married woman shall be with child. How ridiculous must such a discovery make the prophet, and how highly must it enrage the audience, to hear a man at such a juncture as this begin an idle and impertinent tale, which seems to banter and insult their misery, rather than administer any consolation under it.

(d) But of what use or consolation could the future birth of the Messiah be to the house of David at that time? Of very great use without all doubt; for it assured them of the truth of God's promise, in that he would not suffer them to be destroyed, nor (e) "the sceptre to depart from Judah until the Messiah came." It assured them of his almighty power, in that he could create a new thing in the earth, by making a virgin

(a) Isaiah ver. 13. 14.

† *Alma* comes from an Hebrew word which signifies to *hide*, and very fitly agrees with the custom of the eastern countries, who were wont to keep their daughters, while they were in their virginity, from all company and public conversation and interviews. Thus it is said, upon a public and extraordinary consternation, that "the virgins who were kept in, ran, some to the gates, and some to the walls, and others looked out of the windows," 2 Maccab. iii. 19. But there is another and more proper signification, which, from the same word that signifies to *hide* or *cover*, this *alma* will bear, viz. as it denotes one who has not known man, or, according to the Scripture phrase, one whose nakedness has not been uncovered. The knowledge of a woman is expressed in the law of Moses by uncovering her nakedness; and, agreeably hereunto, *alma* is a most proper word for a virgin who is covered, and whose nakedness was never uncovered, or revealed by the knowledge of man. This account is perfectly agreeable to the Hebrew manner of

speech, and to the style of the law of Moses. But this is not all; as several learned men have shewn, that there is a great affinity between the Hebrew and Punic language, this makes the words of St Jerom more remarkable: "*Lingua punicâ, quæ de Hebræorum fontibus manare dicitur, propriè alma virgo appellatur,*" i. e. in the Punic language, which is said to be derived from the Hebrew, she who is properly a virgin is called *alma*, in Isaiah, chap. vii. especially considering that St Matthew renders it by the word *παρθένης*, which signifies a *virgin*, properly so called, the very same word that the LXX. interpreters made use of about three hundred years before St Matthew wrote his gospel, and consequently long enough before this controversy arose between Jews and Christians. Bishop Kidder's Messiah, part ii. chap. v.

(b) Kidder's Demonstration, part 2. c. 5.

(c) Bishop Chandler's Demonstrations of Christianity.

(d) Collins's Grounds and Reasons, page 43.

(e) Gen. xlix. 10.

conceive, and thereby shew himself able to deliver them from their most potent enemies; and it assured them likewise of his peculiar favour, in that he had decreed the Messiah should descend from their family; so that the people to whom he had vouchsafed so high a dignity might depend upon his protection. and under the "shadow of his wings" think themselves secure. (a) In short, God had promised the Messiah should spring from the tribe of Judah and from the family of David, even while that tribe and that family continued a polity undestroyed; and therefore, since that promise was not yet absolved, nor the Messiah as yet come, there was no fear of the extinction of Judah and the house of David at that time, whatever their present distress might be; but as God's promises were immutable, they had all manner of reason to believe, that the enemies now combined against them would, by some turn of Providence or other, be disappointed in their design *.

From the beginning of the Gospels to
Matth. ix 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

Thus one great prophecy at least in the Old, as well as sundry promises in the New Testament, made it a thing necessary, that when the Son of God came to be incarnate, he should be born of a pure and immaculate virgin; and it is impious to dispute the possibility of the thing, when God Almighty was the agent of it. But why this virgin should be (b) married rather than a single woman, is the other question we are to resolve. And in order to do this, we must observe, that by this means Mary's genealogy, not only by her father's side, (which St Luke has recorded) but by her husband's likewise, (which St Matthew has done) came to be deduced; and so we have a double testimony that she sprang from the seed of David, and, according to the promises of old, was the true mother of the Messiah; that by this means we have the testimony of her husband Joseph concerning her virginity, who was not a little uneasy in his mind before he had satisfaction given him by the angel, and might possibly have been the first that would have blasted her reputation, had he not been fully convinced of her innocence and modesty; that by this means our Lord's birth was secured against all imputation of spuriousness, and his mother's character protected from the persecution of opprobrious tongues, which she must have endured, (if not the censure of the law) and brought withal a perpetual scandal upon her family, had not her pregnancy, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, been concealed under the umbrage of a common husband; and that by this means our Lord was provided with a guardian in his childhood and minority, and his mother with a companion in her journey she was shortly to take from Nazareth to Bethlehem, and from thence into Egypt, and both of them with a supporter, who by honest labour in his proper occupation might provide them with the necessaries of life.

These, and several other reasons, might be assigned for our Lord's choosing to be born of a virgin, that went under the notion of being married; but how came he to be

(a) *Spanheim's* Dub. Evang. part i. Dub. 27.

* [Archbishop Usher's interpretation of this famous prophecy seems to me the most natural and satisfactory that I have anywhere met with. The prophecy itself is in these words;—"Hear ye now, O house of David, is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a *sign* (shall work a miracle); behold a virgin (of the house of David) shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good." These words, according to the learned primate, were addressed to such of the royal family as were present, and under apprehension of being instantly exterminated by the confederate kings. The prophet assures them that their apprehensions were groundless, for that the pro-

mise of the Messiah to spring from the house of David should certainly be fulfilled, and fulfilled in the wonderful manner that he had just mentioned. Then pointing to his own son *Shear-Jashub* standing beside him, he informs Ahaz and the princes, that before that child should arrive at the years of discretion, the land of the two confederate kings, and those kings themselves, should be destroyed by the king of Assyria. The intermediate words—"Butter and honey shall he eat, &c." the learned primate considers as information, that miraculously as the Messiah was to be born, he should yet take upon him the infirmities of childhood, and be fed as children commonly were in those countries. *Usher's Annals* ad A. M. 3262. and *Lowth's Commentary*.

(b) *Kidder's Demonstration*, part ii. lib. v.

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a man of poverty and affliction, to live meanly and die ignominiously, when, had he been the true Messiah, he must, according to the representations made of him in the prophets, have appeared as one of the greatest monarchs in the world? This is the grand objection of the Jews; and therefore, to give it a proper solution, it ought to be considered, that the (a) Messiah, in order to accomplish the prophecies concerning him, was to sustain three different characters; for he was to be a prophet and a priest as well as a king. The predictions, indeed, which refer to his kingly office, are more in number, and enlarged upon more copiously, than either of the other; yet both the other are so essential to the character of the Messiah, that, had any one of these been wanting in him, the scheme of man's redemption had been broken and imperfect: And yet it is certain, that these three offices require operations, not only distinct, and peculiar to each, but such as could not equally be exercised, at one and the same time, by one and the same person.

As a prophet, the Messiah was not only to teach and instruct his people, but to undergo the common fate of prophets, in being despised, contradicted, persecuted, and in bearing testimony of the truth of his doctrine by the example of his sufferings for it. As a priest, he was to make sacrifice for the sins of his people; which in this case could not be otherwise done than by offering his own blood, and consequently dying in their stead. Now both these, in the course of things appointed by God, were to go before the entrance upon his kingly office, because the prophecies mentioned this last as a recompence for the faithful discharge of the other two. This is a matter that both the (b) royal and (c) evangelical prophet express so very plainly, that St Paul, in effect, does but expound those passages, when he tells the Hebrews, (d) that "Jesus, for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and honour;" and the Philippians, (e) that "for his taking upon him the form of a servant, and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, God had highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name," &c. Since therefore his regal office was not to commence till after he had accomplished his other two, to complain, that his kingly power was not exercised at his first coming, is to misunderstand the prophecies, and confound the order of events: it is to expect a full accomplishment of predictions, within a very narrow space, that strictly belong to an office still in exercise, and to which the Scripture says (f) "there shall be no end."

2. It is to be observed farther, that the style and manner of prophets, especially when they treat of subjects uncommon, sublime, and spiritual, abound with figurative schemes of speech, and such pompous and bold metaphors and descriptions, taken from sensible objects, as awaken in our minds the most lofty imaginations we are capable of. This the Jews themselves make no difficulty to allow; and (g) some of their greatest doctors have laid it down for a rule, in the interpretation of the prophets, that, in many places, they are not literally to be understood, by reason of those metaphorical expressions, whose true intent is to represent things according to our capacity, by images familiar to our senses. If therefore most of these great and pompous things that are said in the prophets concerning the glorious reign of the Messiah, may be understood of the spiritual benefits which we have received by his coming, such as the graces of our regeneration and sanctification, the wisdom of his laws, the comforts of his ordinances, the holy and peaceable temper which his Gospel inspires, the large extent of its propagation, and the blessed effects, which in all places where it is sincerely believed and practised it produces:—If things be reduced to this sense, I say, I cannot see, but that the character of a powerful prince has been fulfilled in our Saviour already; for what king was

(a) *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii. and his 7th Sermon at *Boyle's Lectures*.

(b) *Psal.* xxii. (c) *Isaiah* liii. (d) *Chap.* ii. 9. (e) *Chap.* ii. 8, 9.

(f) *Isaiah* ix. 7.

(g) *Maim. More Nevoch*, part ii. c. 29. 47. *Menas Ben Israel* Qu. in *Gen.* xxx.

ever so prosperous as he, who, by the propagation of his Gospel, has enlarged his dominions so wonderfully over the most distant regions of the habitable world? Or, what conquest was ever so glorious, as that which he hath gained over the errors and prejudices, the lusts and passions, of wicked and mistaken men, nay, even over all the powers of darkness, and sin, and death, and hell?

From the beginning of the Gospels to
Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

But, be it granted (as it seems indeed very probable) that several passages in the prophets relate to the temporal greatness, prosperity, and peace, that shall attend the government of the Messiah, yet we are to consider,

3. That, before the consummation of all things, there will be an enlargement of Christ's kingdom even here upon earth. For, though he have all power both in heaven and earth already vested in the human nature, united with his own Divine person, yet is not that power so visibly and fully executed as it shall one day be; nor are all those glorious effects as yet accomplished, which the prophets foretold, when describing the victorious and peaceable, the unlimited and everlasting, dominion of the Messiah. The enlightening of the Jews and Gentiles, by bringing such multitudes of the one, and so many nations of the other sort, to the acknowledgment of the truth, is already a partial completion of the prophecies; but there is still a nobler in reserve, when the fulness of both shall come in. He reigns now actually in the hearts of men, and subdues the most formidable of our enemies, by the holiness of his laws, and the mighty operations of his grace; but that dominion and conquest will be much more absolute, when the time comes for every enemy to be utterly destroyed. Though therefore the whole be not, yet abundantly enough has already been fulfilled, to make us acquiesce in a stedfast assurance, that what is still behind will most certainly come to pass. For, sure, how meanly soever they that consider things imperfectly may think of a despised and crucified man, yet there is nothing so gloriously great, that may not most reasonably be expected from that very man, when (a) "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

It is made a strong objection by the Socinians against our Saviour's being the Son of God, that, at the time of his baptism, the Holy Ghost descended upon him, for which there had been no manner of occasion, say they, had the Divinity (which was certainly no less powerful than the Holy Ghost) been personally united to him. While our Blessed Saviour was discoursing concerning his approaching death, and a voice from heaven was heard speaking unto him, he told the people (who seemed to be divided in their opinions of it), (b) "This voice came not because of me," i. e. to satisfy me of the Divine favour, or to comfort me against the agonies of death, "but for your sake," that ye might believe in me: And in like manner, it might be a sufficient answer to this objection, that this visible descent of the Holy Ghost upon our Saviour, was not for his sake, or to convey any virtue or power that he was not equally possessed of by the Divine nature that resided in him, but for the sake of the Baptist, and those that were then present with him, even to inform them of the excellency of his person and his Divine mission: For so the voice which immediately follows the prodigy, (c) "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; (d) Hear ye him," plainly shews that this whole transaction was designed for the instruction of all the company. Our Saviour indeed was now entering upon his prophetic office, and fit it was that the world should have some previous notice of it before he came to open his commission. When he came to offer himself to John for baptism, John indeed, by some sudden inspiration, knew him, but he had not as yet made any public declaration of that knowledge; and therefore God took care to give the company this glorious manifestation of his being his Son, and a person sanctified, by this descent of the Holy Ghost upon him, to declare his will

(a) Rom. i. 4.
Chap. xvii. 5.

(b) John xii. 30.

(c) Matth. iii. 17.

(d) Ibid.

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&c. or 5439.
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to the world (according to the prophecy (a) concerning him), and whose words and doctrine it therefore concerned all men to hear and obey. Our Blessed Saviour, indeed, as he was God, had no need of this unction of the Holy Spirit, but, as he was to execute the prophetic office, it was expedient for him to have it: For as a prophet is not to speak in his own name, but in the name of God, and what he has suggested to him by the Spirit of God; so this prophetic office was to be performed, not by the Divine nature of our Lord, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. "We must therefore (with a great Divine (b) of our church) distinguish between the excellencies and perfections of Christ, which flowed from the hypostatical union of the two natures, and those which flowed from the donation and anointing of the Holy Spirit. From the hypostatical union of the natures flowed the infinite dignity of his person, his impeccability, his self-sufficiency to fulfil the law, and satisfy the Divine justice; as from the anointing of the Spirit flowed his knowledge of all evangelical mysteries, the doctrines and precepts which he delivered in his Father's name, and the many miraculous works which he did in confirmation of his mission and doctrine." For this is plain to every one that looks into the gospels, that, almost in every page, our Saviour (c) owns his mission from God; that the doctrines which he taught were not his own, but God's; that they were all dictated by the Spirit of God; and that the miracles which he exhibited in testimony of these, proceeded from the same Spirit of God. Upon the whole therefore we may conclude, that Jesus Christ, being now in a state of humiliation, and emptied of the form of God, acted, in things relating immediately to his prophetic office, not as God, but only as a prophet sent from God; not by the power of his Divine nature, but of that Spirit by which he was anointed and sanctified to that office; though, notwithstanding this quiescence in the Deity, being still God, of the same essence derived from the Father, he might do many other things by virtue of his Divinity, such as discerning the hearts of all men, walking upon the sea, and stilling the stormy winds with a word, &c. And as this divinity was part of the doctrine he was to publish, he might, without any contradiction to himself, assert, that God was properly his Father, and he properly his Son; that "he and his Father were one, and that all men were to worship the Son, even as they worshipped the Father."

Something of the like nature is to be said, in relation to our Saviour's being tempted by the devil, viz. that though his Divinity did set him far above the utmost opposition of any created being, yet did not that Divinity exert itself upon all occasions, but sometimes suspended its operations, and was quiescent, as we said before. (d) That the Divinity was thus quiescent in Christ until he entered upon the public exercise of his prophetic office, is generally thought by most orthodox divines; that in all the actions relating to the execution of that his office, it ceased in the like manner to act, we have just now endeavoured to prove; and it is generally thought, that this was the case of his temptation by the devil, in which his Divine perfections lying by (as it were), and forbearing to engage, he is to be considered abstractly as a man, though much more perfect than any other man. For fit it was that he (who, for this very reason perhaps, is called the second Adam) should overcome the great enemy of mankind, in that very nature, alone and unassisted, wherein the first Adam was so miserably foiled.

Whether the devil might know that our Saviour was in reality the Son of God, or only some peculiar favourite of his, divines are at a stand to determine. It is the observation of Origen, that (e) "all the while that our Saviour was under the temptation he never confessed himself to be the Son of God;" and therefore, (f) since the dispensation of the Gospel was not fully and perfectly understood by good angels, but gradually manifested to them, it is no wonder that the devil should be ignorant of the

(a) 'Isaiah xlii. 1.
of St John.

(b) Dr Lightfoot on Mark xiii. 32.

(d) Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. ii.

(c) Vid. *Whitby's* Preface to the Gospel

(e) Rom. 6. in *Lucan*,

(f) Eph. i. 10. and 1 Pet. i. 12.

mysteries of the Gospel, particularly that “great mystery of godliness, God’s manifestation in the flesh.” The devil, therefore, seeing our Saviour, after he had been (*a*) “declared the Son of God,” so long in the wilderness with wild beasts, and hungry without any food to sustain him, might be induced to question whether he was indeed the Son of God, in the most proper and highest sense of the words, and thereupon incited to assail him: but, if even he knew him never so well, such is his inveterate malice, that it hath often prevailed with him to attempt things very foolish and impossible. For, what could be more so than for a creature to attempt to be like God, or to annul the truth of the prophecies concerning Christ? What could be more pernicious to him than the death of the Lord of Life for the redemption of mankind? and yet this he attempted with the utmost eagerness, and by setting all his instruments to work to accomplish it, though (*b*) “it was impossible for our Lord to be held under the power of death.” Whatever Satan therefore might conceive of Christ, (as Petavius retorts the argument upon the head of Crellius) he could not but certainly know from the Scriptures that he was to be the Redeemer of mankind, and the author of their salvation; that he was “the seed of the woman who was to bruise his head; to sit on the throne of his father David, and there rule for ever:” and therefore, knowing all this, he could not hope to prevail in his temptations of our Lord, unless he could believe that he was able to reverse both the decrees and oath of God. Whether therefore the devil knew or knew not our Saviour, it may well be deemed an infatuation in him to think of being able to pervert him as he had done our first parents in their obedience to God; but then it was far from being a foolish or unnecessary thing for our Lord thus to suffer himself to be tempted, (*c*) since he hath instructed us, that not any—the best and most exalted—degree of virtue sets men above temptations; and since thereby he has encouraged us to hope for his assistance and support under the like circumstances; both because, (*d*) “himself hath suffered, being tempted,” and because, (*e*) “he was in all points tempted like as we are, he cannot but be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” These were the true ends and reasons why our Saviour suffered temptation; and the proper and natural inference from hence, is that which the same author to the Hebrews makes, (*f*) “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in time of need.”

From the beginning of the Gospels to
Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

[“But it may be said, that, though the general circumstances of this history be consistent with the purposes for which Christ came into the world, there are however in the detail of it certain appearances which cannot be reconciled to our views of nature and of the Divine government, and which tend to invalidate our belief of the whole transaction.”—To enable us to estimate the force of this objection, it is previously necessary that we know what these appearances are, and whether they result from the history itself, or from our misconception of the narrative which it presents.

“The circumstances which occur in this narrative may be viewed in three different lights. They may be viewed as events that happened in the most literal and sensitive meaning which the words can convey; or they may be regarded as the representation of scenes that were exhibited only in vision to the mind of Jesus; or, lastly, they may be considered as a picturesque and lively description of the seductive conceptions that were actually suggested to his mind by Satan—a description in which the tempter and his arts are brought forth before our imaginations as a specimen of what takes place in every temptation that assails us.”

The first of these suppositions is that which has been most frequently adopted; and though to many wise and pious men it has appeared liable to great objections, I cannot

(*a*) Matth. iii. 17.

(*b*) Acts ii. 24, 25.

(*c*) Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. ii.

(*d*) Heb. ii. 18.

(*e*) Ibid. Chap. iv. 15.

(*f*) Ibid. ver. 16.

A. M. 4034,
&c. or 5439.
Ann. Dom.
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think any of these objections insuperable. That the devil has been occasionally permitted to appear in a bodily form, cannot be called in question by any one, who admits the authenticity and Divine inspiration of the Scriptures; and if, in the form of a serpent, he seduced the *first* Adam from his duty, there is nothing incongruous in the supposition that he assumed the form of a man to assail the *second*. He is not, in this narrative, represented, as has sometimes been said, as openly assuming his true character of the enemy of God. At least nothing of this enmity appears in the two first temptations; but rather a friendly concern for Jesus under his present and impending sufferings, and suggestions, as we shall see by and bye, how these sufferings might be diminished or averted entirely. The third temptation, if interpreted literally, does indeed represent Satan as openly declaring himself the enemy of God; and this is not agreeable to the devices by which he is exhibited in Scripture as deceiving mankind at large, or even as he deceived our first parents; but he might, by the time that he proposed the last temptation, have had strong suspicions that he was more than man with whom he was contending; and between despair and hope he might make, as other daring combatants have made, one desperate effort to decide the contest. On account, however, of this difficulty, many learned and pious Christians, among whom we may class Warburton, have had recourse to *vision* for the removal of it.

They who adopt this opinion, suppose that "Jesus was placed in imagination only on the pinnacle of the temple; that the shew of worldly dominion and grandeur presented before him was unsubstantial; and in short, that the whole was a delusory representation, formed by Satan in the fancy of our Lord, weakened as he was by long continued fasting, and prepared by solitude for regarding the internal fictions of the mind as real existent objects."

That solitude, especially in a wild and desert country, has some tendency to produce such effects on the mind must perhaps be granted; but to this view of the case it has been well objected, that "it ascribes to Satan a most unlimited power over the human heart. It supposes that he has at his command our perceptions and opinions, the sources of all our conduct. But this supposition renders us mere machines moved by foreign powers, and leads, by direct consequence, to the destruction of our accountability as moral agents."

"Others, therefore, have been disposed to regard the scenes here described as a visionary representation excited in the mind of Jesus by the Spirit of God, for the purpose of exhibiting to him Satan as his most formidable opponent, and of prefiguring the difficulties, which, under the conduct of this arch-apostate, would embarrass him in the execution of his mediatorial office. According to this account, therefore, the transactions, which are here recorded, were a Divine prophetic vision of the temptations which Satan would throw in the way of Jesus during the course of his ministry, in order to induce him on some occasions to employ, improperly for the supply of his private wants, the miraculous powers with which he was invested for public purposes; to propose the evidence of his mission in a more irresistible form than is consistent with our present probationary state; and to comply with the prejudices of the Jews, by assuming at once the splendour and magnificence of a temporal prince. This interpretation is free from one insuperable objection that lies against the last; but it is exposed to others in its turn. It is too ingenious to be just—too remote from the ordinary use of language to receive the approbation of sober criticism—and it rests on a supposition concerning the interposition of the Divine Spirit, for which the text furnishes no authority, and which is in direct contradiction to the obvious tendency of the whole passage. Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, for the purpose of enduring temptation as an appointed part of his earthly trial; but when placed there, he was left to contend with Satan, and not with illusions from on high."

Not satisfied with these hypotheses, two very learned and ingenious men * have suggested a quite different interpretation of the narrative from that which has usually been given of it. They begin with observing, that “ the incidents, which it describes, occurred at a very decisive period in the life of Christ. He had just left the state of privacy, in which his youth was spent; his approach as the Messiah promised to the patriarchs had just been publicly announced to his countrymen by the messenger appointed to prepare the way before him: the Spirit of God had visibly descended on him in baptism; and a voice from heaven had declared, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* The time therefore was come for his appearing on a new scene,—as the Teacher and Redeemer of mankind. To fulfil all righteousness, and to prove him worthy of his office, it remained only that he should be tried by temptation, and that in imitation of the ancient prophets he should prepare himself by a course of rigid fasting for the sacred duties he was destined to perform. For this purpose he was led by the Spirit of God into the wilderness, that in solitude and abstinence he might form deliberately the plan of his public life, contemplate in all its aspects the arduous work before him, and measure his power against the difficulties with which he was called to contend. It cannot surely appear to us improbable that this Messenger of heaven should be exposed to trials. The plan of redemption rendered it expedient that he should assume the character of the Son of Man; and as a man he was liable to the same temptations which encompass his followers; for *it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, and in all points tempted like as we are, though without sin.* But if there be no improbability in the supposition that Jesus should be subjected to trials, it surely cannot appear incredible that the agent, in conducting these attacks on his virtue and pious resignation, should have been the same malicious spirit which in the beginning deceived our first parents, and gave rise to all the wickedness and misery which we observe among their descendants, and from which it was the great object of Christ’s incarnation to redeem the human race.”

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

“ Now the method in which Satan is commonly represented in Scripture as seducing mankind, is by working on their imagination and their passions. He does not appear to them himself, but he places before them occasions of sin, influences the train of their thoughts, and employs against them all the deceivableness of unrighteousness, by suggesting to their minds such views as are most favourable to his purpose, by inflaming their desires, and through this medium hurrying them forward to the commission of iniquity. The power which he exerts over them operates through the force of motives and persuasion, and in a manner similar to that by which one man corrupts the principles and undermines the virtue of another. And what reason have we to believe that he acted differently in the present instance? Why may we not suppose that he employed against the human nature of Christ the same artifices that he employs against ourselves? Is it incredible that he should suggest to Jesus, pinched with hunger, that he ought no longer to wait, confiding in Providence, for the usual appointed means of nourishment, but to exert his miraculous power for creating bread to himself? Is it incredible that he should suggest to Jesus, deliberating anxiously about the best method of executing his commission to the human race, some difficulties concerning the expediency of the gradual humiliating plan committed to him by his Father; and that he should inspire the thought of producing more immediate conviction on his countrymen, by descending from the pinnacle of the temple or from the clouds of heaven *²; or of

* The late professor Finlayson of Edinburgh, and before him Mr Hugh Farmer in his Essay on the Demoniacs of the New Testament. It is from the seventh and eighth admirable sermons of the former of these authors that the substance of all that is here inserted within brackets has been taken.

*² [“ The Jews at this period entertained a strong expectation that their promised Messiah was about to appear; and under the influence of that expectation they had formed conjectures concerning the manner in which he should come. From a mistaken interpretation of some of the prophecies concerning him,

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extending the benefits of his religion at once to the whole race, by appearing in his native dignity as the King and Sovereign of the nations? That there is nothing either incredible or improbable in supposing that Satan might labour to insinuate such thoughts into the mind of Jesus, is demonstrated by the fact that these are the very suggestions which he has committed to all his emissaries since that time, as sources of argument against the wisdom of the plan pursued by Christ for instructing and saving mankind."

"The only thing that can occur as an objection to this interpretation, arises from the picturesque and dramatic form of the narration. Satan seems introduced in person, and to carry on with Jesus a bodily and interesting series of transactions; whereas, according to the account now given, no visible intercourse took place. But to any man who has attended carefully to the style of Scripture, this objection will carry no force; for nothing is more common than to see there the invisible actions and intercourse of spiritual beings, exhibited under the visible form that is familiar to our imagination. What is done in the secret recesses of the mind is brought forth to the senses, and clothed in material colours. Even the Almighty God, whose counsels have been from everlasting, *whom no man hath seen nor can see*, is frequently described as deliberating about the measures he shall adopt, and conversing visibly with his creatures. And Satan himself, in language very similar to what occurs here, is said to have presented himself among the sons of God, and to have disputed personally with his Maker about the integrity of Job. In all such cases, the language is to be regarded as an accommodation to the mode of conception of those for whose use the narratives were immediately written, and is to be interpreted agreeably to the peculiar nature and operations of the beings whom it respects."

That this solution of the difficulties attending the Gospel history of our Lord's temptation is ingenious, cannot be called in question, and therefore it is here inserted at considerable length. That it is infinitely preferable to the hypothesis which resolves all the transactions into visionary illusions will be readily granted; but it differs much less in reality from the usual and literal interpretation of the narrative than its ingenious authors seem to have thought it does. The difference indeed consists entirely in the greater or less probability of Satan's having appeared, on so singular an occasion, in a bodily form; for, on both these hypotheses, he assailed our Lord by his usual artifices of deceit—by the presentation of bad motives, and the suggestion of fallacious arguments; and on both hypotheses the ideas presented by the last temptation appear to have been instantly expelled from the mind of our Lord.]

There are few things wherein mankind seem to be more agreed, than in the acknowledgment and acceptance of miracles, as an authentic and indisputable testimony that the persons entrusted with such power were employed by God; because the constant apprehensions which both reason and revelation have given us of God, are, that he will not employ his power (as no true miracles can be done without the concurrence of his power) to deceive his creatures; and therefore the reasoning of Nicodemus, when he came to visit our Saviour, was right, (a) "We know that thou art a teacher come from God, because no man can do these miracles that thou dost, except God be with him." Since miracles then are the avowed effects of a Divine power, we must certainly be mistaken in our judgment of them, when, with regard to their author, we esteem one

they had concluded that he would descend suddenly in visible majesty from the clouds of heaven, and make his first public appearance in the temple of Jerusalem. When Jesus therefore was about to enter on the public discharge of his office, Satan artfully suggested to him the advantage of gratifying in this respect the prejudices of the people, and of giving the

evidence which they expected. With this view, the tempter proposed that he should drop from the summit of the temple as from the clouds, and, under the authority of this seal of heaven, call on the astonished multitude instantly to acknowledge his commission." *Finlayson's Sermons*, p. 160.]

(d) John iii. 2.

greater than another. In effects, indeed, that are produced by human power, we are apt to say that some of them are greater than others, i. e. that they require more and greater degrees of power for the production of them; but this distinction vanishes in our consideration of the Supreme Being, to whose Omnipotence the greatest effect we can imagine gives no limitation, but is equal with the smallest under the compass of his acting*. To us, perhaps, it may seem a greater cure to dispossess a demon than to drive away a fever; but in the hand of the Son of God, while he dwelt among us, they were operations equally easy; and yet a misconception in this matter has certainly led some into an opinion, that the several demoniacs mentioned in the Gospels, were only so many persons afflicted with some strange and uncommon diseases.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

But that these demons or evil spirits which our Saviour, his apostles, and the primitive Christians, expelled out of the bodies of men, could not be natural diseases, is plain both from the Scriptures and ecclesiastical writers, who make a constant and manifest distinction between the curing of diseases and casting out of devils; for when the evangelist tells us that (a) "they brought unto Christ all sick people that were taken with divers diseases, and those which were possessed with devils, and those that were lunatic and had the palsy, and he healed them;" when (b) "he gave to the apostles power against evil spirits to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sicknesses and diseases;" and accordingly (c) "they healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils;" when Irenæus (d) informs us, that the Christians in his days "did truly cast out devils, and heal the sick by imposition of hands;" and (e) Origen, that "they cast out devils, and healed many diseases;"—can any one of tolerable understanding think, that the diseases healed, and the devils cast out, were one and the same thing?

That there were evil spirits of this kind, the Holy Scriptures have taken such abundant care to acquaint us with their origin and fall, their names and numbers, their government and orders, their malicious designs and employments, &c. that no one can doubt of their existence who believes these Holy Oracles to be true. That both among the Jews and Gentiles, before our Saviour's advent, men were possessed with these evil spirits, is evident from the testimony of (f) Josephus, who tells us of a very powerful form of exorcism which descended from Solomon, who learned it of God; and from the testimony of (g) Plutarch, who acquaints us, that the exorcists of most nations advised those that were possessed to repeat the Ephesian letters. And that these evil spirits, in our Saviour's time, were distinct substances, and not the diseases of mankind, is evident from the circumstances of their ejection, from their expostulating with him, "What have we to do with thee? Art thou come to destroy us? Art thou come to torment us before the time?" And from his commanding them sometimes to be silent, and sometimes "to come out of the man, and enter into him no more," &c.

The truth is, these apostate spirits had gotten so far possession of the world, that they began to rival God in his worship; and therefore one end of his Son's incarnation is said to be this, (h) "that he might destroy the works of the devil, and (i) overcome the strong one, and divide his spoils." And this, by the way, may suggest a reason why, at or about the time of our Saviour's advent, and perhaps more especially in the places which he frequented, God might permit the devil to exert himself in an unusual manner, in order to be the more signally triumphed over by the Saviour of the world, and those that were delegated by him, to convert mankind to his religion. Nay, had I leisure to proceed to ecclesiastical writers, I might easily show how victorious

* { The raising of a house or ship into the air is a visible miracle. "The raising of a feather, when the wind wants ever so little of a force requisite for that purpose, is as real a miracle, though not so sensible with regard to us."] *Hume's Essay on Miracles*, Note K.

(a) Matth. iv. 24.

(c) Mark i. 34.

(e) Contr. Cels. lib. i.

(g) Sympos. lib. i. q. 5.

(h) 1 John iii. 8.

(i) Luke xi. 21, 22.

(b) Ibid. Chap. x. 1.

(d) Lib. ii. c. 16.

(f) *Antiq.* lib. viii. c. 2.

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the name of Christ was over these principalities and powers of darkness, even after his departure out of this world; for "that our Lord was sent for the destruction of these evil spirits, you may now learn, says Justin Martyr, (a) from what is done before your eyes; for many Christians throughout all the world, and in every city of your empire, have healed many that were possessed of the devil, and still do they eject them by the invocation of the name of Jesus, whom none of your inchanters, conjurors, or sorcerers, were able to expel. And give me a man, (says Tertullian (b) in that noble challenge of his to the heathen powers) give me a man here before your tribunals, that is visibly possessed by the devil, and if, when he is commanded by any Christian to declare what he is, he do not immediately confess himself to be a devil, not daring to lie to a Christian, then let the blood of that Christian be shed before you in that very place. [To the tale told by Josephus, indeed, of the powerful form of exorcism which was handed down to that age from Solomon, little credit appears to be due; and it must be confessed that both the Jews and earliest Christians were too ready to attribute to the agency of the devil, events and phenomena for which they could not account by their knowledge of the laws of nature. But though *they* were liable to deception, the Son of God was not; and yet he admits the reality of demoniacal possessions, and distinguished between them and other occult diseases. This he surely would not have done, had those possessions not been real; for the prejudice, if it was nothing more, was very far from being, as it is said to have been, a harmless prejudice. On the Gospel history of possessions by the devil, hath been raised the whole trade of exorcisms, accompanied with all the mummerly of frantic and fanatic agitations, with the most scandalous frauds and the most sottish superstitions. As our Lord knew all things, the whole of this enormous superstition with all its consequences must by him have been clearly and distinctly foreseen; and is it conceivable, that, with such a view before him, a Divine Teacher of truth and righteousness would have given the smallest countenance to so fatal an error—nay, that he would not, in the clearest and most precise terms, have pointed out its absurdity, as well as the mischief with which it was teeming? In the whole compass of moral science, there is not a conclusion more firmly established than that he who wilfully commits a premeditated *fraud*, or even *concurs* in it, is answerable for all the evil which necessarily or naturally flows from that fraud; whilst the author of important truth, on the other hand, is perfectly blameless of whatever follies, or errors, or crimes, the perversity of men may afterwards build on his foundation. What then are we to think of the conduct of our Lord, if those disorders, which were supposed to be occasioned by demoniacal possessions, were nothing more than natural diseases—such as *lunacy*, *convulsions*, or that disease well known among the ancients by the name of *lycanthropy*? He had many opportunities of pointing out the national mistake, if it was a mistake, not only to his own immediate followers, but to the persons who came to be healed, and even to the multitudes at large, who, from curiosity or whatever other motive, attended on his ministry. When the Pharisees accused him of casting out devils by Beelzebub, how natural would it have been to say that there was no such thing as possession by devils; that he had done nothing more than cure miraculously a natural disease; and that their whole doctrine of demonianism was a system of delusion? Instead of this he reasons with them on the reality of demoniacal possession; and shews them that the prince of devils could not be supposed capable of acting so absurdly as to wage war with his own servants, and exert his power against his own interests. Nay, he does more than all this to support the opinions generally received on this subject. On various occasions he *talks* with the *devils themselves*; asks their *names*; commands them to be *silent*; and on one occasion enjoins a legion of them to come out of two unfortunate men, permitting them, at the same time, to enter into a *herd of swine*,

(a) Apol. i. pag. 45.

(b) Apol. c. 23.

which, in consequence, ran violently over a precipice, and perished in the waters. Swine are not capable of those natural disorders of the imagination, which, it is said, constituted all that was real in the supposed possessions; and therefore, when we find great numbers of them stimulated to instantaneous madness, in consequence of the request of the devils and the permission of Jesus, we must conclude, that the effect was produced by some superior agent operating on their frames, and hurrying them to destruction. For this extraordinary event, what other reason, asks Bishop Warburton, can be given, or indeed what better can be conceived, than that it was to afford a certain mark of distinction between a *real* and an *imaginary* possession?

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matt. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

But were not the symptoms of the demoniacal possessions recorded in the Gospels the same with those which accompany some natural diseases? Undoubtedly they were; nor is it conceivable that they could have been different; for if an evil spirit were permitted to disturb the vital functions of the human frame, is it possible that he could do this without affecting the solids or fluids, or both, and thus occasioning some or other of the symptoms which accompany the various diseases to which mankind are liable? A circumstance, therefore, which *must accompany* demoniacal possessions if *real*, cannot surely be employed as an argument to prove that those recorded in the Gospel were *imaginary*! The evangelists indeed, as if they had been aware of this circumstance, and foreseen the inference which would be drawn from it, distinguish, in their narratives, what they call possessions, from the diseases with which we are now so desirous to confound them.—“They brought to him, say they, all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those who were POSSESSED WITH DEVILS, and those which were LUNATICS, and those that had the Palsy, and he healed them;”—words, which no man who wished to be understood, could have employed, had he not conceived *demoniacal possession* to be something very different from *lunacy* or *epilepsy*.

But all these objections to the literal interpretation of this part of Holy Scripture proceed either from a desire to represent Christianity as nothing more than a republication of natural religion, or from a groundless apprehension of giving countenance to the lying wonders of the church of Rome, or to the equally extravagant delusions of the *new birth* of modern fanaticism. That Christianity is something very different from any system of religion which can be called *natural*, it is one great object of this work to shew; and that no parallel can be fairly drawn between the ancient and modern possessions, must be evident to every man capable of cool reflection. The triumphs of our Lord over the powers of darkness were an essential part of the great scheme of redemption, “for the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil,” as well physical as moral; whilst the exorcisms of popery and the frantic agitations of methodism are contrived to support superstition on the one hand, and fanaticism on the other. The office of the *second Adam* was to restore us to the inheritance which we had lost by the fall of the *first*. But as the *immortality* purchased for us by the Son of God, was not, like that which had been forfeited, to commence in this world, being reserved for the reward of the next, it was necessary that he should prove his victory over the grave by his own resurrection from the dead; and as it was foretold from the beginning, that the promised seed of the woman should bruise the *head* of him who first introduced death into the world, it was certainly expedient, perhaps absolutely necessary, to exhibit some *sensible* evidences of his triumph over the powers of death and darkness. From the history of the fall, the very genius of the Gospel, and the nature and constitution of the system of grace, the casting out of devils appears therefore to have been an essential operation in the erection of the kingdom of Christ. Though some of the Jewish prophets had performed many and great miracles, and even restored the dead to life, it was yet reserved for the Son of God—the Saviour of the world—to dispose of the infernal powers as he pleased by a word, and even to compel them to proclaim their own ruin:—“What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God; art

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thou come hither to torment us before the time?"] But we forbear to prosecute this subject farther*, interesting as it is, and proceed to the next objection, which relates to our Saviour's behaviour at the marriage-feast.

Our Blessed Saviour, indeed, was a person of so grave and serious a deportment, that whatever instances we find of his pity and compassion to mankind, of his grieving and being troubled, and even weeping upon some occasions, we can meet with none of his laughing, nor any token of a mirth or joy extraordinary, in the whole history of his life: But we must not from hence infer, that he was of a stiff and precise temper, or in any degree an enemy to such forms of civility, or social usages, as were then in practice. If therefore we may be allowed to suppose (what seems indeed highly probable) that this marriage at Cana was between persons of his own kindred and acquaintance, and that by the very rules of celebrating such festivals among the Jews, all excess and intemperance was excluded, then will it follow, that it could be no disparagement to our Saviour's character to accept of the invitation that was made him, and to be present at such a meeting.

Among us indeed (especially among the vulgar sort), there are sometimes, on these occasions, liberties taken that are not so justifiable; but among the Jews, there was always the greatest decency and sobriety imaginable observed in the celebration of their marriages. (a) To this purpose a governor of the feast (as some say of the sacerdotal race) was always chosen, whose office it was to have the superintendency of the dishes and wine, and to oblige the guests to observe all the decorums that religion required*; and not only so, but other persons, at this time, were likewise appointed to break glass vessels, as a common signal, to give the company notice, that they had already drunk enough, and were not permitted to run to excess. Under this regulation, it is scarce imaginable that the guests, at a Jewish marriage, could be guilty of any intemperance, and least of all at this in Galilee, where our Saviour's presence and observation, the gravity of his behaviour, and the seasonableness of his discourse, may well be presumed to heighten the decorum, and to keep all the company under a proper restraint.

What therefore the governor of the feast says to the bridegroom, (b) in relation to the water that was turned into wine, is to be understood only as a general representation of a custom usual at other festivals, which was to bring the best wine at first, and towards the conclusion that which was worse; which custom (as the governor tells him) was not observed here; for the difference between this entertainment and others is, that "thou hast kept the good wine until now." (c) So that when men have well drunk, is only a circumstance thrown in to illustrate the comparison, or describe the latter end of a feast, and has no manner of reference to the condition of the company then present. But allowing the words ἔσαν μεθύοντες to be a description of the condition that the company were then in, yet it will by no means follow, that they had proceeded to any intemperance, because the words are equally capable of an innocent as well as a vicious meaning. (d) Μεθεῖν indeed, in its primitive signification, means no more than drinking after the sacrifice; and as there is nothing in the etymology that determines this to be

* The reader will find it fully discussed by Dr Mead in his *Medica Sacra*, with Mr Farmer in his *Dissertation on the Gospel possessions*, on the one side of the question; and by Warburton in his twenty-seventh *Sermon*, and in the ninth book of the *Divine Legation*, &c. on the other. Dr Hales likewise has some judicious observations on the subject in the second volume of his *Analysis*, &c.

(a) *Lewis's Antiquities of the Hebrew Republic*, vol. iii.

* [This practice was not peculiar to the Jews. It seems to have been the custom amongst the ancients

of various nations, to choose a king or master of each marriage feast, to order how much each guest should drink, and whose orders all the company were obliged to obey. Among the Romans he was chosen by the throwing of dice, upon the sides of which were engraven or painted the images of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Apollo, Venus, and Diana, and he who threw up Venus was made king or governor. Vide *Hor. lib. i. Od. 4.* and *lib. ii. Od. 7.* Ed. in usum Delph.]

(b) John ii. 10.

(c) Dr Pearce's *Vindication of our Saviour's Miracles*, part iii. (d) *Ibid.*

done to excess, or beyond the proper bounds of joy in a festival; so there are several instances in Scripture, wherein it was certainly done according to the rules of sobriety and moderation. Thus (to mention one out of many) in the LXX's version of Genesis, where it is said, that (a) "Joseph's brethren drank and were merry with him," the words are ἐμεθύθησαν μετ' αὐτοῦ, and yet no one can imagine, but that, in their present circumstances, thinking no other than that he was the governor of Egypt, and being apprehensive that he had no good design against them, they were too much upon their guard, and solicitous about their own safety, to give any way to intemperance in his presence: And if the expression here, and in (b) several other passages, may be taken in a virtuous sense, we cannot but conclude (unless we can suppose that St John designed to expose his master's behaviour upon this occasion), that he intended we should understand him in the most favourable acceptance*.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

We indeed, in our translation, say, that the water-pots, wherein the wine was created, (c) contained two or three firkins a-piece; but some, who have looked more nicely into μετρητής, or measure, here spoken of, (d) have brought it so low as to make the whole six pots hold no more than about fourteen or fifteen gallons of our English measure. But not to descend so low, we will suppose at present, that the quantity of wine made by our Saviour at this feast was as large as our translation represents it; yet, whoever considers the nature of Jewish marriages, how they were celebrated with feasting and rejoicings, not only on the day of solemnity (as it is with us), but for six or seven days after, and that at these feasts, not only all their relations, and neighbours, and acquaintance, were invited, but that it was well taken likewise, if any others (though not invited) would come to partake of the entertainment, and bear a share in the joy. Whoever considers this, I say, cannot but imagine, that a very large quantity of wine must needs be requisite at such a time, since it was to be a supply, not for that day only, but for all the succeeding days until the time of the feasting was expired.

Nay, even supposing farther, that our Lord, upon this occasion, did not confine himself to a precise quantity, proportionate to the company, or period of the festival, and (what is more (e) that some of the company might abuse his liberality by their intemperance (which is a concession not to be gathered from the text), yet he cannot therefore be charged with administering to their excess by making such an ample provision, any more than we can charge the Providence of God with being instrumental to all the gluttony and drunkenness which is committed in the world, merely because he affords that meat and drink which men of inordinate appetites abuse to excess. The truth is, as it is an high commendation of Providence that it crowns us with plenty, (whatever use we make of it), and bestows upon us all things richly to enjoy; so was it not unbecoming a person, invested with a Divine commission, to give, on this occasion, an eminent instance of his flowing liberality, and, by his generous provision for the family, to leave a grateful memorial of his benevolent regard to two persons that

(a) Chap. xliii. 34.

(b) Vid. *Whitby's* Annot. in locum.

* [The probability is, that the expression under consideration relates not at all to excess, nor indeed to drinking at any other feast than that which was kept at a marriage. The Abbi Mariti, speaking of the age of the wives of Cyprus, says,—"It is certain, that at the birth of a son or daughter, the father causes a jar filled with wine to be buried in the earth, having first taken the precaution to seal it hermetically; and in this manner it is kept till the child's marriage. It is then placed on the table before the bride and bridegroom, and is distributed among their relations, and the other guests invited to the wedding." "If such a custom prevailed formerly, and prevailed among the

Jews, it is evident that the wine first drunk at a marriage feast must have been the best, as nothing but wine of a very superior quality could have been preserved from the birth of a child to his or her marriage, even at the early age at which marriages were made in Judea. The probability therefore is, that the governor of the feast meant nothing more than to express his surprise at the bridegroom's having deviated, as he supposed, from the common practice of presenting, the jar of old and superior wine at first. See *Burder's* Orient. Customs.]

(c) John ii. 6.

(d) Vid. *Cumberland* of Weights and Measures.

(e) *Whitby's* Annot. in locum.

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very likely were his relations, and had just entered into the honourable state of matrimony.

Since therefore our Lord answered, in so free and plentiful a manner, his mother's request at last, there seems to be something in their supposition, who, from the propriety (a) of the Greek expression, think that his mother spake to him before the wine was out, but when it grew so low that she plainly perceived there would not be enough for the company; and therefore our Saviour's reply to her will very justly bear this sense. *τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοὶ*; "What is it to you or me? i. e. the care of providing wine upon this occasion does not properly belong to you or me; but admitted it did, *my hour is not yet come* It is too soon as yet to set about it; because it is highly fitting that the necessity of that supernatural supply which I intend them should be a little more felt, in order to recommend the benefit itself, and to give the manner of attaining it a power of making a deeper impression on their minds."

This seems to be no unnatural construction of the words, and removes all the seeming harshness of our Saviour's answer, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" We mistake the matter however very much, if we think that the word *γυνή*, which we render *woman*, was any title of disrespect or indifference, (as it seems to be in our translation), since it is frequently used by the best authors when the highest marks of esteem are intended. The polite Xenophon himself puts it in the mouth of one of his Persian chiefs, when he was addressing himself to a captive lady, and comforting her under her unfortunate circumstances; and certainly a time there was that our Lord called his mother by this appellation, when he was far from being harsh or undutiful to her, even when he was hanging on the cross, and tenderly recommending both his mother to the care of his beloved apostle, and that apostle to his mother's love and affection, (b) "Woman, behold thy son." So little does our Saviour's conduct, in this whole transaction, deserve these horrid and impious censures which of late have been thrown upon it!

Whatever some modern Jews and infidels may allege against the abuse (as they pretend) which the writers of the New Testament have put upon the prophecies of the Old, by applying them to a wrong sense; (c) no man need be told that an attempt of this nature had been as impertinent, the affront to man's reason as insolent, and the event as fruitless, nay, as fatal to their cause, had they imposed a false or even controverted sense upon the predictions confessedly relating to the Messiah, as it would have been had they urged such predictions as were not acknowledged to belong to him at all. The truth is, if the Jews understood the prophecies relating to the Messiah in one sense, and the apostles, in their address to them, applied them in another, we cannot see how they could ever have made one proselyte, being in the same condition with what St Paul describes, when he tells us, that (d) "he who speaketh in an unknown tongue (and why not he that speaketh in an unknown meaning?) speaketh to the air, and becometh a barbarian to him that heareth but understandeth him not." So that every Jew, converted to the Christian faith, is an implicit proof of the apostles applying the ancient prophecies in a sense that was then current and familiar to them.

That the famous prophecy in Isaiah (e) is thus applied by St Matthew (f), to prove that Christ was born of an immaculate virgin, we took occasion, in our answer to the fourth of these objections, to shew. The remaining allegation is, that the name of the person, of whom the prophet speaks, was to be Immanuel: whereas the name of that Son of Mary, of whom St Matthew speaks, by God's express command was Jesus, and therefore the words of the prophet are misapplied by the evangelist.

(a) *ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι*, ver. 3.
Boyle's Lectures, Sermon viii.
(f) Chap. i. 23.

(b) John xix. 25. 27.
(d) 1 Cor. xiv. 2.

(c) Stanhope's Sermons at
(e) Chap. vii. 14.

Now nothing is more common in Scripture than by the calling or naming of a person or thing, not to mean that the person or thing would be commonly distinguished by that name, but only that it should have such properties and qualities in it as that name did denote; or, in other words, that it should really be what the full sense of that name imported. Thus, of the city of Jerusalem it is foretold by the prophet, (*a*) that it should "be called the city of righteousness," when it really was to be such a city; for in the foregoing words it is promised, "that God would restore her judges as at the first, and her counsellors as at the beginning." And in like manner, though it be declared by this prophet (*b*), that the wonderful child, which God promised to the house of David, should be called Immanuel, yet if he was but what that name properly imports, "God with us," in a most eminent and peculiar manner, it is not to be doubted but that the prophecy received its full completion in the person of our Saviour Christ.

From the beginning of the Gospels to
Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

For besides God's universal presence, there is a presence of favour and distinction, whereby he is said to be, in a more peculiar manner, with those whom he loves and blesses above others. And in this regard the child here spoken of is justly called Immanuel, because (as St Paul speaks) (*c*) "God was in him reconciling the world to himself," for his sake and sufferings, "not imputing their trespasses unto them;" so that by him (*d*) "they who were some time afar off are made nigh, have access to the Father, (*e*) are accepted in the Beloved," and become, of enemies and strangers, friends and children, insomuch that God vouchsafes to dwell in them, and to be one of them. And as God unites us to himself by grace, so did he, in this child, condescend, by an ineffable generation, to unite our substance and nature to himself, "to be perfect God and perfect man, (*f*) that so he might be the first born among many brethren, and redeem the children from death, who are partakers of flesh and blood, by himself taking part of the same." Let it not then be any more objected that the child in the prophecy could not be called Immanuel, whom we confess to have been called Jesus; for he is therefore our Immanuel, because our Jesus; therefore most eminently, most literally, "God with us," because, by so miraculous an union, a "Saviour of his people from their sins."

It may seem perhaps surprising to some, that St Matthew should so frequently introduce his citations with a "This was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet." But whoever considers the idiom of the Hebrew tongue, cannot but know that the phrase, answering to the expressions, "that it might be fulfilled," means no more than that "hereby was verified," or that "this event answered to the prediction," or the like. Nay, the Jews were accustomed to say, that a passage of Scripture was then fulfilled when any thing happened that was applicable to it; and therefore it is no wonder that St Matthew, who himself was a Jew, and very probably wrote his Gospel in the Hebrew tongue for the benefit of his countrymen, should naturally fall into their style and manner of expression.

Now, whoever considers the state of the Jews in Egypt, their bondage, and danger of utter extinction, by reason of the decree which passed for the destruction of all their male children (had not the Providence of God prevented the execution of it), will soon perceive the cause why Egypt is made in Scripture the common figure and emblem of extreme danger and imminent death; and why a deliverance out of Egypt should be applied to every great act of preservation where there seemed to be no visible means of escape; insomuch, that whenever any instance of such a watchful and protecting Providence happened, it was an usual and proverbial speech among the Jews (who were wont then, as they are still, to apply sentences out of Holy Writ to the common occurrences of life) to say, in Scripture phrase, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son," or "he hath

(*a*) Isaiah i. 26.
(*e*) Ibid. Chap. i. 6.

(*b*) Ibid. Chap. vii. 14.

(*f*) Rom. viii. 29.

(*c*) 2 Cor. v. 19.

(*d*) Eph. ii. 13, 18.

Heb. ii. 14.

A. M. 4034.
&c. or 5439.
Ant. Chris.
Ann. Dom.
30, &c.
Vulg. Ær. 28.

called him out of Egypt," i. e. he hath rescued him from the jaws of death, or from the like danger that the Israelites were in when he brought them out of Egypt with a "mighty hand and a stretched-out arm." Since Joseph then was ordered to flee to Egypt, and to tarry there until Herod was dead, for this reason, because "Herod sought the young child's life;" this distinguishing preservation of Jesus, by means of his retreat till the danger was over, will justify the evangelist (even though it had been any other country, as well as Egypt, whereunto he retired) in applying to him the proverbial saying upon that occasion, (a) "Out of Egypt (i. e. out of manifest danger) have I called my son."

The deportation of the ten tribes from their native country into a foreign land, there to die or live in slavery, was so grievous a calamity, that the prophet Jeremiah (b) (by way of prosopopœia) introduces Rachel, the favourite wife of Jacob, that great progenitor of the Israelites, making bitter lamentation for their loss, and refusing all consolation, because there were no hopes of their recovery. And the murder of so many innocent babes at Bethlehem, by the bloody decree of Herod, was an event so dolorous to their tender parents, that the evangelist, when he came to relate it, thought he might justly (by way of accommodation) apply the words of the prophet, and, in the name of all the miserable mothers that had lost their children, make Rachel upon this occasion (and as a farther accomplishment of the prophecy) return to her weeping again. The rather, because Rachel, having been long dead before the captivity, may, with equal propriety, by the evangelist, as she is by the prophet, be introduced weeping; the rather, because she was (c) so fond a lover of children, that she is fitly enough brought in here in the room of the tender mothers who wept for the loss of theirs; and the rather, because the slaughter of the Bethlehemites might be called that of her children, because among them (d) was the place of her sepulchre, after that she had lost her life in the bitter pangs of child-birth.

There is no prophet, we own, wherein it is expressly said that the Messiah should be called a Nazarene; (e) but the observation of St Jerom, in his comment upon this place, is not amiss, viz. that when St Matthew (f) "mentions the word prophets in the plural number, (whereas in other places he had always cited some particular prophet), he thereby shews that he did not take the words from the prophets but only the sense." Since then the title of Nazarene, both Jews and other enemies of Christianity, have always, by way of contempt, given to our Blessed Saviour, because he was supposed to come out of that very city, from whence it was thought impossible that (g) "any good thing should come;" and since most of the prophets speak of Christ as a person that was to be reputed vile and abject, (h) "a stranger to his brethern, and even an alien to his mother's sons, (i) despised and rejected of men, despised and esteemed not," here is the plain sense of the words, "he shall be a Nazarene:" (k) and the angel, by God's appointment, no doubt, sent him to this contemptible place, that he might thence have a name of infamy and contempt put upon him, according to the frequent intimation by the prophets.

(l) The word we render *wise men*, in its original, signifies *magicians*, which however now it bespeaks not so good a character, was nevertheless heretofore a name of very innocent and honourable signification. The studious and inquisitive, whose business and profession led them to search into nature its most abstruse causes and effects, and more particularly into the motions and dispositions of the heavenly bodies, were distinguished by this title: and in what profound veneration and respect they were held, appears from the most important matters, both sacred and civil, being committed to

(a) Matth. ii. 15.

(b) Chap. xxxi. 15.

(c) Gen. xxx. 1.

(d) Ibid. xxxv. 19.

(e) Bishop Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, part ii. c. 3.

(f) Chap. ii. 23.

(g) John i. 46.

(h) Psal. lxi. 8.

(i) Isaiah liii. 3.

(k) Whitby's Annotation in locum.

(l) Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. i.

their administration. They were the counsellors, the judges, the priests, the princes, in a word, the oracles of the eastern countries; [and the prophet Daniel was, by Nebuchadnezzar, made president of all the wise men, (a) i. e. *Archimagus* of Babylon.] But as the best arts are sometimes perverted to ill purposes, so it happened to these, that, falling into the hands of bad men, who met with people ignorant and credulous, and not only easy, but even glad to be deluded, they degenerated into the cheats of judiciary astrology; and these abuses grew so general, as at last to fix an ill sense upon the word, and a scandal on the science itself.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

It were a wrong and great indignity to the persons now before us, not to believe them of the nobler and better sort; but we can hardly be persuaded (though some would endeavour to do it) that they were persons of royal dignity, (b) because we cannot reasonably suppose, that the evangelists would have omitted a circumstance of so great moment, both for their honour and our Lord's. We can hardly think, but that some account would have been given of their royal train and equipage, and that all Jerusalem would have been moved as much to see their entry, as they were to hear their questions: nor can we imagine that it would have been decent in Herod to have received them with no more respect; to have dismissed them to Bethlehem without attendants; much less to have laid his commands upon them to return back, and bring him an account of the child as soon as they had found him, had they been persons of equal rank and dignity with himself. Upon these considerations, we may justly deny them the title of kings, though we cannot but allow them to be persons of great wisdom, learning, and integrity; of which ours, and some other translations of the Bible, have been so sensible, as very prudently to decline the odious name of magicians, and to call them the wise men of the East; but what part of the east it was that they came from, few interpreters have agreed.

(c) Some have imagined that these travellers came out of Persia; others from Caldea, others from Arabia, and others again from Mesopotamia. All these countries lay eastward from Jerusalem and the Holy Land; and in each of these some antecedent notions of the Messiah may be accounted for. In Chaldea and Persia, by the captivity of the Jews and the books of Daniel; in Arabia, by the nearness of their neighbourhood and frequent commerce; and in Mesopotamia, besides these common helps, they had the prophecy of their countryman Balaam, concerning a star (d) that should come out of Jacob to direct them. (e) But as we know of no record wherein this prophecy was preserved but the book of Moses, which the people of Mesopotamia neither read nor believed; so it seems evident, that Balaam's words do not refer to a star that should arise at any prince's birth, but to a certain king who should be as glorious and splendid in his dominions as the stars are in the firmament. Upon the whole, therefore, it seems most likely, that these wise men came out of Arabia (f), (which, according to Tacitus, was the bound of Judea eastward) not only because the gifts which they presented were the natural products of that country, which was famous likewise for its magi, insomuch that Pythagoras (as Porphyry informs us) went into Arabia to acquire wisdom; but because its neighbourhood to Judea might give these wise men the advantage of discerning the star better than any more distant nation had.

For that this star was no celestial one, and such as might be seen at a vast distance, its motion contrary to the ordinary course of stars, its performing the part of a guide to the travellers, and that by day, very probably, as well as night, its accommodating itself to their necessities, and disappearing and returning as they could best, or least be without it, and (what is a circumstance as remarkable as any) its pointing out, and

(a) Dan. ii. 48.

(b) *Whitby's Annotations* on Matth. ii. 1, &c.

(c) *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. i. [And *Hales's Analysis*, vol. i. and ii.]

(d) Numb. xxiv. 17.

(e) *Whitby's Annotations*.

(f) *Ibid.*

A. M. 4034,
&c. or 5439.
Ann. Dom.
30, &c.
Vulg. Ær. 28.

standing over the very place where the child was, (which the height and distance of common stars make it impossible for them to do) are a sufficient demonstration. It seems not improbable therefore, that what the evangelist calls a star, was only that glorious light (a) which shone upon the Bethlehem shepherds, when the angel came to impart unto them the tidings of our Saviour's birth; for that this light was exceeding great is clear from that expression which styles it the (b) "glory of the Lord;" and that it was a light from heaven hanging over their heads, the words in the (c) Greek, as well as (d) the Latin version, sufficiently inform us.

Now every one knows, that such a light at a great distance appears like a star; or at least after it had thus shone about the shepherds, it might be lifted up on high, and then formed into the likeness of a star; where standing vertically over Judea for some time, it might direct the Arabian astrologers (whom so strange a phænomenon could hardly escape) to the capital city, as the likeliest place to gain intelligence of the newborn king, whose "star they had seen in the East," i. e. from the place of their abode which was in the East: For, should we suppose that this light was placed in any part of the eastern hemisphere, it would have denoted something extraordinary among the Indians, or other eastern nations, rather than among the people of the Jews.

(e) But how came these eastern sages to know that this star, or luminous appearance in the heavens, (place it where we will) denoted the birth of a king? Now, for the resolution of this question, it must be observed, what (f) some heathen historians tell us, viz. "That through the whole East it was expected, that about this time a king was to arise out of Judea who should rule over all the world." Nor could it be well otherwise, since, from the time of the Babylonish captivity, we find the Jews dispersed (g) through all the provinces of the Persian monarchy, and that (h) in great numbers, and (i) many people of the land becoming Jews; and after their return home, increasing so mightily that they were dispersed through Africa, Asia, and many cities and islands of Europe, and (as Josephus (k) tells us) wherever they dwelt making many proselytes to their religion. (l) Now these wise men, living so near to Judea, the seat of this prophecy, and conversing with Jews, i. e. with those who every where expected the completion of it at that time, as soon as they came to see this extraordinary star, or body of light hovering over Judea, they might rationally conjecture, that it signified the completion of that celebrated prophecy concerning the king of Jewry, over the centre of which land they, being then in the East, might see this meteor hang *.

(a) *Whitby's* Annotations.

(b) Luke ii. 9.

(c) *Περὶ δαμψεν αὐτοῦ.*

(d) *Emicuit ex alto.*

(e) *Whitby's* Annotations.

(f) *Tacit. Hist. lib. v. Suet. de. Vita Vesp. c. 4.*

(g) *Esther iii. 8.* (h) *Ibid. chap. ix. 2.*

(i) *Ibid. chap. iii. 13.* (k) *Antiq. lib. xiv. c. 12.*

(l) *Whitby's* Annotations.

* [This is certainly a very satisfactory account of the Eastern wise men, as well as of the star which guided them to Bethlehem; but the reader will probably be more pleased with the following, though the difference between the two accounts is small and of little consequence.—"The glory of the Lord, which shone round about the Jewish shepherds, and was therefore probably a miraculous light of a globular form and considerable diameter, might have appeared on the same night, and at the same time, to some pious Magi of the Persian empire, diminished, at the distance of several hundred miles, to the size of a star, or uncommonly bright meteor, and rising, in its ascent from the shepherds, in the south-west quarter of the horizon—an unusual region, which must have strong-

ly attracted their notice, and excited their attention. From its situation they might have been led to conceive, that this was the STAR to rise out of JACOB, and the SCEPTRE from ISRAEL, foretold by the celebrated Chaldean Diviner, and probably their ancestor Balaam; and that it denoted THE MESSIAH, whose coming was foretold, in the famous prophecy of the seventy weeks, by Daniel their Archimagus. And besides these prophetic inducements, we have reason to think, that God, who never left himself without a witness in the heathen world, in a dream or vision induced these pious sages from the East (*ἀπο ἀνατολῶν*), to go to Jerusalem for further intelligence respecting the birth-place, or residence, of the true born (*ὁ ἱσθις*) KING OF THE JEWS, whose star they saw at its rising (*ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ*), and whom they came to worship with royal and religious adoration. This may fairly be collected from the oracular warning which they afterwards received in a dream, (*χρηματισθεῖς*), not to return Herod to on their way home.] *Hales's Analysis, &c. vol. ii. p. 712.*

Not long after the departure of these eastern sages from Bethlehem, we find a prodigious multitude of innocent babes inhumanly put to death upon the account of him whom these wise men came to adore. But to vindicate the justice and goodness of Providence in this proceeding, we need not appeal to God's universal dominion over all his creatures, and the right he has to take away in what manner he pleases the being which he gives us; we need only consider the present life, not as our last and final state, but as one whose principal tendency is to another; and then it will appear that there is no certain measure to be taken of the Divine justice or goodness towards us, without taking in the distributions of that other life, which indeed is the main end of our living at all. What Solomon therefore, in his wisdom, says of the righteous in general, is much more verified in the case of these harmless babes: (a) "In the sight of the unwise they seem to die, and their departure is taken for misery; but they are in peace: for though they were punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality." (b) For a frail, a short, a troublesome, a dangerous life, God gives them the recompence of an immortal, a securely happy, a completely glorious one; which not only vindicates but magnifies his goodness and liberality to them. He considers their infancy, and the noble fruit which might have sprung from these tender plants, had they been allowed to grow to full maturity, and accordingly rewards them: for though they wanted the will of martyrdom which ripper years may have, yet it must be allowed that they were clear of that voluntary and actual sin which those ripper years would have contracted: and therefore, as in the most literal sense (c) they were not defiled with sensual pleasures, but left the world in virgin innocence; as they were truly redeemed from among men, whose early translation to a state of bliss prevented the hazards and temptations of a wicked world; and as they were (strictly speaking) "the first fruits unto God and the Lamb," who began to shed their blood in the cause of a "new born Saviour;" so God hath been pleased to vouchsafe them a peculiar honour, (d) "to sing, as it were, a new song before the throne, and to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, because in their mouth was found no guile; for they were without fault before the throne of God."

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

We have but one objection more to answer, and that is a seeming inconsistency in our Saviour, in discovering to the Samaritan woman his Divine character, which he had so often desired his disciples to conceal. Our Saviour, it is true, was so far from making any unnecessary declarations of himself, that both upon (e) St Peter's confessing him to be the Christ, and (f) after his transfiguration, wherein he was declared to be the Son of God, we find him charging his disciples to say nothing of this, until his resurrection; (h) because their testimony in these points might not only be like a matter concerted between him and them, but because indeed they were not qualified to be his witnesses in these things, until they had received power from on high by the coming down of the Holy Ghost. It is to be observed, however, that when our Lord is himself fairly called upon, and especially by persons invested with authority, he never once conceals his Divine nature and commission.

When (h) "the Jews came round him in Solomon's porch, and said unto him, how long dost thou make us doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly;" his answer is express, "I told ye, and ye believed not: The works that I do in my Father's name they bear witness of me; for I and my Father are one." When he stood before the judgment seat, and the high priest demanded of him, (i) "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God;" his answer is, "Thou hast said:" Or (as St Mark (k) expresses it), "I am; and ye shall see the Son of Man

(a) Wisdom iii. 2, &c.
(d) Ibid. ver. 3, 4, 5.
on Matth. ix. 30.

(b) Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. i.
(e) Mark viii. 29.
(h) John x. 24, &c.

(f) Matth. xvii. 9.
(i) Matth. xxvi. 63, 64.

(c) Rev. xiv. 4.
(g) Whitby's Annotations
(k) Chap. xiv. 62.

A. M. 4034,
&c. or 5439.
Ann. Dom.
30, &c.
Vulg. Ær. 28.

sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Nay, there are some instances wherein, of his own accord, and without any provocation of this kind, he freely discovers who he was: For, having cured the man that was born blind, and afterwards meeting him accidentally, (a) "Dost thou believe on the Son of God," says he? Whereupon the man asking, "Who is the Son of God, that I may believe on him?" Our Saviour replies, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he who talketh with thee." And therefore we need less wonder that, when this Samaritan woman had first of all confessed him to be a prophet, and, as her words seem to imply, (b) was a little dubious whether he was not the Messiah, our Saviour should prevent her enquiry, and tell her voluntarily that he was. Especially considering, that (c) such a declaration might be a means to prepare her, and the rest of the Samaritans, whenever his apostles should come and preach the Gospel unto them, to receive their testimony, as we find, by the history of the apostolic Acts, that they did it with great gladness*.

Thus have we endeavoured to satisfy all the exceptions of any weight that the lovers of infidelity have hitherto made to this part of the evangelical history; and if Christianity stood in need either of the support or testimony of heathen authors, we might say, that the incarnation of Christ, the Son of God, is no more than (d) what the Greeks, as Julian avers, affirm both of Æsculapius and Pythagoras, viz. that they were both the sons of Jupiter, though they appeared in human nature; which doctrine, in the evangelist St John, Amelius, *² the master of Porphyry, allows to be true: [That some notions of a Trinity of Divine Persons in the one Godhead, and of the incarnation, or rather repeated incarnations of one of them, have prevailed in the East from the remotest antiquity *³]: That the birth of our Blessed Jesus of a virgin immaculate, is no

(a) John ix. 35, &c.

(b) Ibid. ch. iv. 25.

(c) *Whitby*, in locum.

* [On this subject the reader will derive much instruction from Bishop Horsley's sermons on St John iv. 42. They are three in number, and published in the 2d volume of the general collection of his sermons.]

(d) *Huetii*, Quæst. Alnet. lib. ii. c. 13.

*² This Platonist, upon reading the beginning of St John's Gospel, swore by Jupiter, "That the barbarian (as he called him) had hit upon the right notion, when he affirmed, that the Word which made all things, was in the beginning, in place of prime dignity and authority, with God, and was that God who created all things, and in whom every thing that was made, had, according to its nature, its life and being; that he was incarnate, and clothed with a body, wherein he manifested the glory and magnificence of his nature; and that after his death, he returned to the repossession of his divinity, and became the same God which he was before his assuming a body, and taking the human nature and flesh upon him." *Euseb. Præp. 9. Evang. lib. xi.*

*³ ["Mattrā, the Methora of Pliny, is situated about eighteen miles from Agra, on the direct road to Delhi, and is particularly celebrated for having been the birth-place of Creeshna, who is esteemed in India, not so much an incarnation of the Divine Veeshnu as the Deity himself in human form. The history of this personage is among the most curious of all that occur in Indian mythology. The Sanscreeet narrative of his extraordinary facts, in some points, approaches so near to the Scriptural accounts of our Saviour, as to have afforded real ground for Sir W. Jones to sup-

pose that the Brahmins had, in the early ages of Christianity, seen or heard recited to them some of the spurious gospels (why not some of the genuine gospels?) which in those ages so numerously abounded, and had ingrafted the wildest parts of them upon the old fable of this Indian Apollo. The birth of this Divine infant was predicted, and a reigning tyrant in India, by name CANSA, learning from the prediction that he should be destroyed by this wonderful child, ordered all the male children, born at that period, to be slain; but Creeshna was preserved by biting the breast, instead of sucking the poisoned nipple, of the nurse commissioned to destroy him. From fear of this tyrant he was fostered in METHORA by an honest herdsman, and passed his innocent hours in rural diversions in his foster-father's farm. Repeated miracles, however, soon discovered his celestial origin. He preached to the Brahmins the doctrines of meekness and benevolence; he even condescended to wash their feet, as a proof of his own meekness; and he raised the dead by descending for that purpose to the lowest region." *Maurice's Indian Antiquities*, vol. 3. p. 45. See likewise the *Asiatic Researches passim*, but especially vol. i. article ix. The learned president seems to suppose that the Brahmins had seen only the spurious gospels. That they had seen such gospels is indeed very probable; but it is likewise probable that they had heard the genuine Gospel at least recited. All Christian antiquity represents the apostle St Thomas as having preached in India, and the traditions of that country at present corroborate that representation. He would, of course, preach the truth as it was in Jesus, and when we consider the corruptions that have crept into different churches in Eu-

more than (a) what the ancient Jewish doctors expected in their Messiah; and therefore Simon Magus, who greatly affected that character, pretended that his mother Rachel bore him without the loss of her virginity: That the new star, or body of light, which upon our Saviour's birth conducted the wise men to him, (b) is acknowledged by Julian, though he would gladly ascribe it to natural causes; is set off with great eloquence by Chalcidius * in his comment upon Plato's Timæus; and perhaps might be that very phenomenon *² which Pliny (c) describes under the name of a comet: That our Lord's forerunner, John the Baptist, was such a person as the Gospel represents him, viz. an exhorter of the "Jews to the love and practice of virtue, and to regeneration by baptism and newness of life," we have an ample testimony in Josephus (d): That our Lord himself was certainly a prophet, Phlegon, † who was the emperor Adrian's freed-man, acknowledges, and in his history has related several events which he foretold: That he was (e) a great worker of miracles, the authors of the Talmud own; nor can Celsus and Julian, his bitterest enemies, deny it, only they would gladly impute them to a wrong cause, his great skill in magical incantations: That human bodies were frequently possessed with devils, who afflicted them with grievous and tormenting diseases, is the joint concession both of (f) Jamblicus and Minutius *³ Felix; and that our Blessed Lord had the power of curing these, (g) and of destroying the dominion of evil spirits wherever he came, is the great complaint of Porphyry, who makes it no wonder that their cities should be wasted with plagues, "since Æsculapius, and the rest of the gods, ever since the admission of the Christian religion, were either become useless or fled. So prevalent is the force of truth, that it seldom fails to draw confessions from those who least of all intend them.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ii. 8. Mark xi. 23. Luke vi. 1.

rope, we need not be surprised that the Brahmins, who heard the pure Gospel preached, but were yet determined to retain their own gods and modes of worship, distorted such parts of it as they ingrafted into their own mythology so as to make it serve their idolatrous purposes. It is not therefore necessary to suppose that they were acquainted *only* with the spurious gospels, though it is not improbable that some such gospels may have found their way even to them.]

(a) *Huetii*, Quæst. Alnet. lib. ii. c. 15.

(b) *Ibid.* Demons. prop. iii.

* In his relation of some portentous significations of stars, he adds: "Est quoque alia venerabilior, et sanctior historia, quæ perhibet ortu stellæ cujusdam insolitæ non morbos, mortesque prænunciatas, sed descensum Dei venerabilis, ad humanæ servationis, rerumque mortalium gratiam, quam à Chaldæis observatum fuisse testantur, qui deum nuper natum muneribus venerati sunt." *Hammond's Annotations on Matth. ii. 2.*

*² The words of Huetius concerning this matter are these:—"Scribit Plinius exortum fuisse aliquando cometam candidum, argenteo crine ita fulgentem, ut vix contueri posset quisquam, specieque humanâ

Dei effigiem in se ostendentem." Quæst. Alnet. lib. ii. c. 16.

(c) *Lib. ii. c. 25.*

(d) *Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 7.*

† He composed an history, digested by Olympiads, as far as the year of Christ 140. In his history he takes notice, that in the Olympiad, which determines about the middle of the 33d year of the common era, there happened the greatest eclipse of the sun that ever had been seen, insomuch, that the stars were visible at noon-day, and that afterwards there was a great earthquake in Bithynia. Several critics believe, that this was the darkness which happened at the death of Jesus Christ, which is a matter we shall have occasion to enquire into when we come to that part of his history.

(e) *Huetii Demons. prop. iii.*

(f) *De Myster. sect. ii. c. 6.*

*³ The words of Minutius are worth observing:—"Impuri spiritus vitam turbant, somnos inquietant, irrepunt etiam corporibus occultè, ut spiritus tennes; morbos fingunt, terrent mentes, membra distorquent, et ad cultum sui cogunt. In Octavo."

(g) *Huetii Demons. prop. iii.*

DISSERTATION I.

OF THE FOUR EVANGELISTS, AND THEIR WRITINGS.

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&c. or 5439.
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BEFORE we proceed any farther in the History of our Blessed Saviour's life, it may not be amiss to give some short account of the four evangelists that have recorded it. I call them four, because whatever spurious pieces gained credit in the world afterwards, the tradition of the church, from the beginning of the second century, makes it evident, that the Gospels then received were only the four Gospels which we now own.

St Matthew, who stands in the front of these evangelists, and is generally allowed to be the first who committed the Gospel to writing, was the son of Alpheus, a Galilean by birth, a Jew by religion, and a publican by profession. Among the Jews, as well as other nations, the custom at this time prevailed of having more names than one; and therefore we find his brother evangelists, St Mark (*a*) and Luke (*b*), giving him the name of Levi, with a civil intent to avoid all mention of his former not so reputable profession before he was called to the apostleship; but (what is no less an instance of his own modesty) in the Gospel written by himself, he not only takes the name by which he was most commonly known, but generally adds the odious epithet to it of "Matthew the Publican †;" intending thereby, no doubt, to magnify the grace of God, and the condescension of our Blessed Saviour, who did not disdain to take into the highest dignity of the Christian church those whom the world rejected and accounted vile.

(*c*) Whether he was born in Nazareth or no, it is certain that his ordinary abode was at Capernaum, (*d*) because his proper business was to gather the customs on goods that came by the Sea of Galilee, and the tribute which passengers were to pay that went by water; for which purpose there was a customhouse by the sea-side, where Matthew had his office, or toll-booth, "there sitting at the receipt of custom." Our Lord having lately cured a famous paralytic, retired out of the town to walk by the sea-side, where he taught the people that flocked after him; and having espied Matthew in his office, he asked him to become one of his disciples; whereupon, without any manner of hesitation, without staying so much as to settle his accounts, and put his affairs in order *, "he left all and followed him."

(*a*) Chap. ii. 14.

(*b*) Chap. v. 27.

(*c*) *Kirslin*, in *Vitâ 4 Evang.* says he was, part xxii.

(*d*) *Cave's* Lives of the Apostles.

† [This seems to me a complete confutation of Dr Marsh's hypothesis—that *Levi* was the original name of the apostle recorded in his supposed Hebrew document, and therefore retained by St Mark and St Luke, but exchanged by St Matthew himself, not because *Levi* was a mistake in the same original document, but because it would have instantly reminded the Jews of his former occupation, which was peculiarly offensive to them. But had this been the case, surely the man who was so cautious of giving offence, would not, in his catalogue of the apostles, have mentioned himself by the denomination of Matthew the Publican, which rendered the supposed change of name perfectly useless. There is no room for doubt, therefore, but that *Matthew* and *Levi* were both original names of the evangelist.]

* [This is certainly not probable, because it would not have been just. Matthew was in duty bound to settle his accounts with his employers, and Christ, who wrought a miracle to procure money to pay tribute for himself and St Peter, would never have admitted among his followers a man who had not rendered an account, and a faithful account, of the taxes or custom which he had received as a publican. The mistake arises from the supposition that on the very day on which St Matthew was called, he not only followed our Lord, but made the feast for him which is mentioned; but this is nowhere said or even insinuated. Undoubtedly Matthew would rise and go a little way with Christ when thus called; but it is not to be supposed that he was prepared on that day to

We cannot but suppose, that as he lived in Capernaum, the place of our Lord's usual residence, and where his sermons and miracles were so frequent, he must have been acquainted with his person and doctrine before this time; and, consequently, in a good preparation to receive the call with gladness. And that he did so, a good evidence it seems to be, his entertaining our Lord and his disciples at dinner next day in his house; whither he invited several of his own profession, in hopes, no doubt, that our Saviour's company and converse might make the like impression upon them.

From the beginning of the Gospels to
Matth. ii. 8.
Mark xi. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

From his election to the apostolate he continued constantly with our Lord during his abode upon earth; and after his ascension, for the space of eight years preached the Gospel in several parts of Judea: But being now to betake himself to the conversion of the Gentiles, he was entreated by the Jews, who had been converted to the Christian faith, to commit to writing the history of our Lord's life and actions, and to leave it among them, as a standing record of what he had preached to them; which accordingly he did, and so composed the Gospel which we have now under his name.

(a) The countries in which he preached were chiefly Parthia † and Ethiopia; in the latter of which he converted multitudes, settled churches, and ordained ministers to confirm and build them up, and, having signalized his zeal in the ministry of the Gospel, and his contempt of the world in a life †² of most exemplary abstinence, he is most probably thought to have suffered martyrdom at Nadabar, a city in Ethiopia; but of the time and manner of his death no certain account is transmitted to us.

At the request of the Jewish converts, (as we said) and, as some add, at the command of the rest of the apostles, St Matthew wrote his Gospel about eight or nine years after our Lord's resurrection*: for that it was extant before the dispersion of the apostles is plain from Bartholomew carrying it with him into India, where (as Eusebius (b) informs us) it was found by Panætus, when he went to propagate the faith in those parts, and by such as retained the knowledge of Christ was reputed a valuable treasure.

As it was primarily designed for the benefit of the Jewish converts †³, whatever

make, as St Luke says he made, *a great feast in his own house*. "The feast," as Doddridge well observes, "was after the day of his calling, perhaps some months after it, when he had made up his accounts, and regularly passed his business into other hands;" and to those who have paid any attention to the mode of the Gospel narratives, this rational opinion will not appear to be inconsistent with the mention of the feast immediately after the call.]

(a) *Cave's Lives of the Apostles*.

† As for what is related by Nicephorus, of his going into the country of the cannibals, and constituting Plato, one of his followers, bishop of Myrmæna; of Christ's appearing to him in the form of a beautiful youth, and giving him a wand, which he pitching into the ground, it immediately grew up into a tree; of his strange, converting the prince of that country; of his numerous miracles, peaceable death, and sumptuous funeral, with abundance more of the like nature, they are justly to be reckoned among those fabulous reports that have no ground, either of truth or probability to support them. *Cave's Lives of the Apostles*.

†² Clemens Alexandrinus tells us, that he abstained from the eating of flesh, and that the chief of his diet was herbs, roots, seeds, and berries. *Pædag.* lib. ii. c. 1.

* [There are various opinions respecting the era

of the writting of St Matthew's Gospel, and it is by no means easy to determine which of them is the most probable, for not one of them is absolutely certain. That which is assigned to it by Irenæus, has been supported by such powerful and candid reasoning by Michaelis and his learned translator, that I feel myself compelled to give the preference to it; so that if St Matthew wrote no other account of the life, doctrines, and miracles of our Lord, than that which has come down to us in the Gospel under his name, and which is undoubtedly authentic, it appears to me that he did not write his Gospel before A. D. 61, nor perhaps till two or three years afterwards. I am inclined however to think that he wrote two Gospels, one in Hebrew and the other in Greek; for I do not believe the Gospel that we have to be a translation; and that the former was much less perfect, and written many years earlier than the latter; but of this I have more to say by and bye.]

(a) Hist. Eccl. lib. v. c. 10.

†³ Those who maintain that St Matthew wrote in Greek, produce these arguments for their opinion. 1st, That some of the fathers (such as Origen, Epiphanius, and St Jerom) quote, indeed, the Hebrew of St Matthew, but quote it as a book of no great authority, which they would not have done had it been the true original. 2d, That had St Matthew wrote in Hebrew, the Hebrew names in his Gospel would

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some moderns may say to the contrary, the voice † of all antiquity must carry it against them, that it was originally wrote in Hebrew, not in the ancient pure Hebrew, (for that in a great measure was lost among the vulgar) but in a language commonly used at that time by the Jews of Palestine, (and therefore still called the Hebrew tongue, because wrote in Hebrew characters) which was the Syriac, with a mixture of Hebrew and Chaldee.

This Gospel of St Matthew was for a long time in use among the Jews who had been converted to Christianity, and when, some time before the Romans laid siege to Jerusalem, they retired to Pella, they carried it thither along with them; from whence it was diffused into Decapolis, and all the countries beyond Jordan, where the Judaizing Christians still made use of it in the time of Epiphanius (a) and Eusebius (b) of Cæsarea. But these Christians (c) did not preserve this sacred depositum with all the fidelity they should have done. They added to it several things, which perhaps they might have heard from the mouths of the apostles, or from their immediate disciples, and this in time brought it under the suspicion of other believers. The Ebionites, at length, got it into their hands, and by their additions and defalcations, in favour of some errors they had fallen into concerning the divinity of our Saviour, and the virginity of the Blessed Mother, so corrupted it, that at length it was given up by other churches which adhered to the form of sound doctrine. It continued however a long time in its primitive purity in the hands of the Nazarenes, or first believers in Palestine, who (though they were zealous in the observation of the law) embraced no such opinions as the Ebionites did, nor made any alterations in the Gospel *. But after the extinction of this sect, we hear no more of the genuine Gospel of St Matthew, because the ancient

not have been interpreted into Greek, nor would he have quoted the Old Testament according to the Septuagint translation. 3d, That the Greek language was then very common in Palestine and all the East. And, 4th, Since all the other authors of the New Testament wrote in Greek, why should St Matthew alone write his Gospel in Hebrew? But to these arguments it may be replied, 1st, That the uniform testimony of all the ancients, who tell us that St Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew, is certainly of very great weight; but then we must know that there were two of these copies of St Matthew, the one pure and uncorrupted, of which they have spoken with great esteem; the other depraved by heretics, which they have contemned, and looked upon as Apocryphal. 2d, The Hebrew names interpreted into Greek, prove the very contrary to what would be inferred from it; for this demonstrates that the translation was Greek, and the original Hebrew. 3d, Of the ten passages in the Old Testament that St Matthew cites in his Gospel, there are seven of them which resemble the Hebrew more than the Septuagint; in the other three, the Septuagint and the Hebrew themselves agree; but the plain truth is, that St Matthew quotes by memory, and relates, not so much the words, as the sense of the passages. 4th, However common the Greek tongue might be in Palestine among the better sort of people, yet it is certain that the generality of the Jews spoke commonly what they called Hebrew, which was Syriac and Chaldee mixed with Hebrew. And, 5th, Though all the rest of the New Testament were written in Greek, yet that is no argument why this part of it should; though, if convenience were considered, it should rather, one

would think, be adapted to the general use and capacity of those for whom it was wrote. The dispute, however, is about matter of fact, and this is a fact attested by all the ancients, many of whom had seen the original, and were capable of making a judgment of it. *Whitby's* Prefatory Discourse to the four Evangelists, and *Calmet's* Dictionary under the word *Matthew*.

† All the antients, with one consent, assure us, that St Matthew wrote in Hebrew. Papias, Irenæus, Origen, Eusebius, St Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, St Jerom, St Austin, St Chrysostom, the author of the Latin Commentary on St Mark, which is ascribed to St Chrysostom, and the author of the Synopsis of the Scripture, which bears the name of Athanasius, are a cloud of witnesses who depose this; and therefore strange it is that any should question its being originally written in that language, when the thing is so universally and uncontrollably asserted by all antiquity, not one, that I know of, after the strictest enquiry I could make, dissenting in this matter, and who certainly had far greater opportunities of being satisfied in these things than we can have at so great a distance. *Du Pin's* History of the canon, vol. 11. c. 2. and *Cave's* lives of the apostles.

(a) *Epiphan. Hæres.* 29. c. 7.

(b) *Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 25.*

(c) *Calmet's* Dict. and Preface to St Matthew's Gospel.

* [For an accurate account of the ancient sects called *Nazarenes* and *Ebionites*, and of the particular tenets by which they were distinguished, see Bishop Horsley's Tracts in Controversy with Dr Priestly.]

Greek version which, in the apostolic times, was made from it, having always preserved its primitive integrity, did, long before this, universally prevail, and was looked upon as authentic as the original; for though its author be uncertain, yet every one who mentions it, always ascribes it to some one apostle or other (*a*).

From the Beginning of the Gospels to
Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

When St Matthew began to write, the great question among the Jews was, Whether our Blessed Saviour was the true Messiah or no? and the main tendency of his Gospel seems to prove this. For he shews by his mighty deeds that he was the Christ, the Son of God; that his mother Mary was a virgin; that he was not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it; and that his miracles were not magical operations, nor the effects of any human art, but incontestible proofs of the power of God, and of his Divine mission.

(*b*) St Ambrose observes, that none of the apostles have entered so far into the particulars of our Saviour's actions †, as has St Matthew; that none of them have related the history of the wise men coming from the East, or the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, and some others, but he; that, in short, he has given us more rules for the conduct of life, and more lessons of morality suitable to our necessities, than any; and all this, (*c*) in a natural and easy style (though sometimes mixed with Hebraisms), such as becomes an historian, and especially a sacred historian, whose narration should be free from affectation, and all such trifling ornaments as do not agree with the gravity and dignity of his subject.

Though the name of Mark seems to be of Roman extraction, yet the evangelist now before us was born of Jewish parents, and originally descended from the tribe of Levi. What his proper name was, or upon what change or accident of life he might assume this, we have no manner of intelligence; but as it was no unusual thing for the Jews, when they went into the European provinces of the Roman empire, to conform to the customs of the country, and, while they continued there, to be called by some name of common use; so some have conjectured, that when Mark attended upon St Peter to Rome, he might at that time take upon him this name, which (as he never returned to Judea to reassume his own) he for ever after retained. In the writings of the apostles we read of several called by this name. There is John (*d*), whose surname was Mark; (*e*) Mark, the sister's son of Barnabas; Mark (*f*), who was employed in the ministry; Mark, whom St Paul calls his fellow-labourer (*g*); and Mark, whom St Peter (*h*) styles his son; but which of these was the evangelist, or whether the evangelist might not be a person distinct from each of these, has been a matter of some doubt among the learned.

That he was one of the seventy disciples, and, among them, one of those who took offence at our Lord's discourse of (*i*) "eating his flesh and drinking his blood," some of the ancients have affirmed; but Eusebius (*k*), from Papias, who was bishop of Hierapolis, and lived near those times, tells us positively that he was no hearer or follower of our Saviour. He was converted by some of the apostles, and most likely by St Peter, to whom he was a constant retainer, and served him in the capacity of an amanuensis and an interpreter. (*l*) For, though the apostles were divinely inspired, and, among

(*a*) [See the Appendix to this Dissertation.]

(*b*) *Ambros.* Pref. in Luc.

† If we compare St Matthew with the three other evangelists, we may perceive a remarkable difference in the order and succession of our Saviour's actions, from Chap. iv. 22. to chap. xiv. 13. which has much perplexed chronologers and interpreters. Some pretend that St Matthew should be followed, but others think it more reasonable to submit to the authority of the other three, especially since St Mark, who follows him close enough in every other thing, forsakes him in this particular. However this be, it can prove

no prejudice to the truth of facts, which are the essential part of the gospel; and as to the order of time, the sacred authors are not always solicitous to follow it exactly. *Calmet's* Dictionary under the word *Matthew*.

(*c*) *Beausobre's* Preface sur St Matthieu.

(*d*) Acts xii. 12.

(*e*) Col. iv. 10.

(*f*) 2 Tim. iv. 11.

(*g*) Philemon, v. 24.

(*h*) 1 Pet. v. 13.

(*i*) John vi. 60.

(*k*) *Hist.* Eccl. lib. iii. c. 39.

(*l*) *Cave's* Lives of the Apostles.

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other miraculous powers, had the gift of languages conferred on them; yet the interpretation of tongues seems to be a gift more peculiar to some than others, and it might be St Mark's talent, either by word or writing, to expound St Peter's discourses to those who understood not the language wherein they were delivered.

[Such is the account of St Mark, which has been very generally received in this country since the publication of Cave's lives of the apostles, and fathers of the Christian church. "It is probable, however, that the evangelist is the same person as the Mark who is mentioned in various parts of the New Testament, especially in *Acts* xii. 12. where it appears that St Peter was intimate in the house of his mother. Moreover, the Mark who is mentioned *Acts* xii. 12. accompanied St Paul on his travels (a)." Hence we may conclude, with great probability, that St Mark the evangelist, Mark the son of Mary, who some time attended St Paul, and Mark, who is mentioned by St Peter in his first epistle, are one and the same person; for the objections which have been made to their identity, by Cave and others, have been fully answered by Lardner.

It appears from *Acts* xii. 12. that St Mark's original name was *John*, the surname *Mark* having probably been adopted by him when he left Judea to go into foreign countries, agreeably to a practice which in that age was common among the Jews. It appears also, from the same passage, that his mother's name was Mary, that she lived in Jerusalem, that the Christians of that city frequently assembled in her house, and that, by consequence, she was a Christian herself. From Col. iv. 10. we learn that he was a cousin or nephew of St Barnabas; from *Acts* xii. 25. that he accompanied St Paul and St Barnabas on their visit to the Gentiles; from Ch. xiii. 13 that he departed from them and returned to Jerusalem; and from Ch. xv. 36—40. that in consequence of his departure, St Paul, having refused to take him on his next journey, he accompanied St Barnabas alone, who then quitted St Paul. To St Paul, however, he was afterwards reconciled, and became again his fellow-labourer in the Gospel; for he was with him during his imprisonment in Rome, as appears from Coloss. iv. 10. and Philem. 24. In the latter passage St Paul ranks him among his fellow-labourers, and in the former he mentions his design of sending him to Colosse. It is evident from 1 Pet. v. 13. that St Mark accompanied St Peter also, by whom he was so highly esteemed as to be called his son, probably for the same reason and in the same sense that Timothy is thus called by St Paul (b). It is therefore evident, from what has been said, that St Mark was a native Jew, and could be no stranger to the character of our Lord and his miracles from his earliest years, whether he was one of his personal followers, or converted afterwards to the faith by St Peter; but that he was of the tribe of Levi, as Cave asserts, is by no means certain. It is indeed true that his uncle Barnabas was a Levite; but this will not prove that Mark was likewise a Levite, for it is a mistake that the Jewish families never married out of their respective tribes, as is clearly proved by the case of Christ and John the Baptist. Their mothers are by St Luke called cousins, though Mary was certainly of the family of David and tribe of Judah, and Elizabeth as certainly of the daughters of Aaron.

At whatever time St Mark was converted to the faith, he appears to have accompanied St Peter when he went to Rome, and to have remained there preaching the Gospel till the martyrdom of that apostle; and it was during his residence at Rome, that, according to the concurring testimony of all antiquity, he composed, at the request of the Christians of those parts, the Gospel which goes under his name (c), and which St Peter revised and approved. From Italy he went into Egypt; and having fixed his chief residence in Alexandria, he there, and in the country round about, pro-

(a) [Compare *Acts* xii. 12 with verse 25th of the same chapter.
2 Tim. i. 1.

(b) See 1 Tim. i. 1. and
(c) See *Marsh's* edition of *Michaelis's* Introduction, &c. and *Lardner's* Supplement to the credibility of the Gospel History.]

pagated the Christian faith with such success, that multitudes, both of men and women, not only became converts, but engaged themselves likewise in a more strict profession† of the religion that he taught them than ordinary.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

From Alexandria he removed westward, and passing through the countries of Marmorica, Pentapolis, and some others in his way to Libya, (though the people were barbarous in their manners, as well as idolatrous in their worship) by his preaching and miracles he not only converted, but, before he departed, confirmed them in the profession of the Gospel. Upon his return to Alexandria he preached with all boldness, ordered and disposed of the affairs of the church, and wisely provided for the continuance thereof, by constituting governors and pastors in it. (a) The great number of miracles which he wrought, and the reproaches which some of the converts made upon the senseless idols of the Egyptians, so exasperated their rage, that they were resolved to destroy this introducer of a new religion among them. It was at the time of Easter, when the great solemnities of their god Serapis happened to be celebrated; at which festival, the minds of the people being excited to a passionate vindication of the honour of their idol, broke in upon St Mark, then engaged in the solemn celebration of Divine worship, and, binding his feet, they dragged him through the streets and other rugged places to a precipice near the sea; but for that night they thrust him into a dark prison, where his soul, by a Divine vision, was strengthened and encouraged under the ruins of a shattered body. Early next morning the tragedy began again. For, in the same manner as they had done the day before, they dragged him about till his flesh being raked off and his veins emptied of blood, his spirits failed, and he expired: But their malice died not with him, for taking the poor remains of his body, they threw them into a fire and so burnt them; but his bones and ashes the Christians gathered up, and decently intombed near the place where he usually preached.

(b) After the defeat of Simon Magus, (whereof we shall have occasion to say more hereafter) the reputation of the Christian religion grew so great, and converts at Rome became so many, that they were desirous to have in writing those doctrines which had hitherto been imparted to them by word of mouth only. St Mark, to whom this request was made, accordingly set himself to recollect what he, by long conversation, had learned from St Peter, who (when the other had finished the work) perused, approved, and recommended it to the use of the churches: And for this reason it is, by some of the ancients, styled St Peter's Gospel; not that St Peter dictated it to St Mark, but because St Mark did chiefly compose it out of that account which St Peter usually delivered in his discourses to the people: And accordingly St Chrysostom (c) observes, that the evangelist, in his nervous style and manner of expression, takes a great delight to imitate St Peter.

†² This Gospel indeed was principally designed for the use of the Christians at Rome,

† Philo, in his "Treatise of a Contemplative Life," gives us a long account and high commendation of a set of people (whom he calls *Θεραπευται*), who, in a pleasant place near the Maræotic lake in Egypt, formed themselves into religious societies, and lived a strict philosophic life; and these Eusebius (Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 16.) affirms to have been Christians, converted and brought under these admirable rules by St Mark at his coming into Egypt. But whoever seriously considers Philo's account, will plainly find that he intends it of Jews and professors of the Mosaic religion, and not of Christians; partly because it is improbable that Philo, being a Jew, should give so great a character and commendation of Christians, who were so hateful to the Jews at that time in all places of the world; partly because Philo speaks of them as an in-

stitution of a considerable standing, whereas Christians had but lately appeared in the world, and were later come into Egypt; and partly because many things in Philo's account do no way suit with the state and manners of Christians at that time. *Cave's Life of St Mark.*

(a) *Cave's Lives of the Apostles.*

(b) *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. iv.

(c) *Hom. iii. in Matt.*

†² The original Greek copy, under St Mark's own hand, is said to be extant at Venice at this day, written (as they tell us) by him at Aquileia, and thence, after many hundreds of years, translated to Venice, where it is still preserved, though the letters are so worn out with length of time that they are not capable of being read. There are likewise some Greek manu-

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and from hence some may be apt to think it highly congruous, that it should at first be written in the Latin tongue: But it must be considered, (*a*) that as the Jewish converts in that city understood but little Latin, so there were very few Romans that did not understand Greek, which (as appears from the writers of that age) was the genteel and fashionable language of those times; nor can any good reasons be assigned why it should be more inconvenient for St Mark to write his Gospel in Greek for the use of the Romans, than that St Paul should, in the same language, write his epistle to that church.

We cannot compare St Matthew and St Mark together but must perceive, that the latter had seen the writings of the former, because he often uses the same terms, relates the same facts, and takes notice of the same circumstances (*b*); but we must not therefore infer, that all he intended in his work was simply to abridge him: (*c*) Be-

scripts, wherein the twelve last verses of this Gospel are omitted; but they are extant in the greatest number of the most ancient and authentic copies, as well as in the works of Irenæus, an author of prior date to any of the manuscripts that want them. It is not to be questioned, therefore, but that they originally belonged to St Mark's Gospel, and were suppressed by some ignorant or conceited transcriber, upon the account of some seeming contradictions between St Matthew and this other evangelist, which, with a small skill in critical learning, may be easily reconciled. *Cave's* Lives of the Apostles, and *Beausobre's* Preface sur S. Marc.

[Baronius and other zealots of the church of Rome having taken a fancy to have at least one *Latin* Gospel, fabricated this senseless tale of the autograph of St Mark's Gospel to serve their purpose; and accordingly appealed for the truth of their hypothesis to a *Latin*—not a Greek—manuscript in the library of St Mark at Venice, which they said the evangelist had written with his own hand! “Though this assertion was not only incapable of proof, but like other stories of ancient relics savoured strongly of the fabulous, yet during some time it was difficult to give a positive proof of its falsity; for the dampness of the place, in which the manuscript was kept, had, fortunately for the admirers of this treasure, so materially injured it, as to have rendered it almost illegible. Hence *Misson* contended that it was written in *Greek*, for he fancied that he discovered in it the letters Δ and Σ, and in one passage the whole word KATA. But about forty (now near 70) years ago, *Laurentius a Turre*, in a letter published in *Blanchini Evangeliarum Quadruplex*, part ii. p. 543, threw a new and unexpected light on this obscure subject. He shewed that the manuscript in question was brought to Venice from Friuli (*Forum Julii*), where a very ancient *Latin* manuscript, containing the gospels of St Matthew, St Luke, and St John is still preserved. That this manuscript once contained likewise the gospel of St Mark is certain; because at the end of St Matthew's gospel is written,—explicit evangelium secundum Matthæum, incipit secundum Marcum;—and that the Venice manuscript of St Mark's gospel formerly made a part of the Friuli manuscript appears from the following circumstances. In the year 1534, the emperor Charles IV. (V.) brought with him from

Aquileia, where the manuscript was then preserved, the sixteen last leaves of a Latin manuscript of St Mark's gospel. This fragment is now (1788) at Prague, and has been lately published by *Dobrowsky*, under the title of *Fragmentum Pragensi Evangelii S. Marci vulgo autographi*. That the manuscript now in *Friuli* is no other than the manuscript, which, in the time of Charles IV. (V.) was in *Aquileia* appears from a comparison of it with the fragment in Prague, for they are written in the very same hand, on the same vellum, and in each page are precisely nineteen lines. And that the Venetian manuscript is the remaining part of St Mark's gospel, which fails in the *Friuli* manuscript, appears, first, from its having been sent from *Friuli* to Venice in the year 1420, as a present to the Doge Macenico; and, secondly, from its containing the five first quaternions of St Mark's gospel, of which the Prague fragment contains the two last. *Blanchini* has given a copperplate representing the letters of this manuscript, from which we perceive the cause of *Misson's* mistake. A he mistook for Δ, and E for Σ: and the imaginary word KATA was nothing more than the *second, third, fourth, and fifth* letters of IBATAUTEM. The pretended autograph of St Mark's gospel therefore is nothing more than a fragment of the *Friuli* manuscript published by *Blanchini*, and consequently contains only a part of the Latin translation!”

In this account of the removals of the manuscript from place to place, there is evidently some mistake. If it was brought from *Aquileia* in the year 1534, it could not have been by Charles the IV. for Charles the V. was then emperor, and he does not appear to have taken great interest in such relics. Accordingly *Cave* relates that it was in 1355, when Charles IV. was certainly emperor of Germany, that the manuscript was brought by that sovereign from *Aquileia*. *Cave's* words are,—Integer Codex a multis retro seculis in ecclesiæ Aquiliensis archivis asservatus, 7 quaternionibus constabat quorum duos ultimos Carolus IV. Imper. Ann. 1355, a fratre suo Nicolao tunc patriarcha impetravit, et in ecclesia Pragensi reposuit. *Marsh's Michaelis*, vol. 3. chap. 5. sect. 8. and *Cave's Hist. Liter.* sub. tit. Marc.]

(*a*) *Cave's* Lives of the Apostles.

(*b*) On this question see the ensuing Appendix.

(*c*) *Beausobre's* Preface sur S. Marc.

cause he begins his Gospel in a different manner ; he omits several things, particularly our Lord's genealogy ; he varies from him in the order of his narration ; he relates some facts that the other has omitted ; he enlarges upon others in many particulars, and (what is no mean argument of his truth and impartiality in all the rest) the shameful lapse and denial of his beloved Master St Peter he sets down, with more and more aggravating circumstances than any of the other evangelists have recorded.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

St Luke, who, by some ancient authors is called Lucius and Lucanus, was a Syrian by birth, a native of Antioch, and by profession a physician. Antioch (*a*), the metropolis of Syria, was at this time a city celebrated for the pleasantness of its situation, the fertility of its soil, the riches of its traffic, the wisdom of its senate, the learning of its professors, and the civility and politeness of its inhabitants, by the pens of some of the greatest orators of their times ; and yet, above all these, it was renowned for this one peculiar honour, that in this place it was " where the disciples were first named Christians."

In Antioch there was a famous university, well replenished with learned professors of all arts and sciences, where St Luke could not miss of a liberal education ; however he did not only study in Antioch, but in all the schools of Greece and Egypt, whereby he became accomplished in every part of human literature : And as the Greek academies were then more especially famous for the study of physic, our evangelist, for some time, applied himself solely to the practice of that ; and after his conversion continued very likely in the same profession, which was far from being inconsistent, but rather subservient to the ministry of the Gospel, or the cure of souls.

As to his other accomplishment, the art of painting, the ancients knew nothing of it. Nicephorus (*b*) is the first author that mentions it ; and though a great deal of pains has been taken to prove that some pieces, still extant, were drawn by his own hand, yet the ancient inscription, found in a vault near St Mary's church in the Via lata at Rome, (the place where St Paul's house is said to have stood), where mention is made of a picture of the Blessed Virgin, as one of the seven painted by St Luke, is an argument of better authority for his skill in that art than any that the Jesuit Gretser, in his laborious treatise, (*c*) has produced. But whether ever our evangelist painted the Blessed Virgin or not, it is certain that he has left us so many particulars (omitted by others) relating to the conception, birth, and infancy of her son, (*d*) that he seems to have been acquainted with her, and to have had some share in her confidence.

That he was one of the seventy disciples is a notion inconsistent with his own declaration in the preface to his Gospel ; wherein he informs us, that the facts therein contained were communicated to him by others, who had been (*e*) " eye-witnesses, and ministers of the Word from the beginning : " And therefore the most probable opinion is, that as the Jews lived in great numbers, and had their synagogues and schools of education at Antioch, St Luke was at first a Jewish proselyte, but afterwards, by St Paul, (while he abode in this city) converted to the Christian faith (*f*). A companion of his travels and sufferings he plainly appears to have been, if not from his first conversion, at least from the time of St Paul's first going into Macedonia ; for there, in his account of the apostle's actions, he changes his style, and (*g*) includes himself ever after as a party concerned in the narrative.

The truth is, he followed him in all his dangers, was with him at several arraignments at Jerusalem, and accompanied him in his desperate voyage to Rome, where he still attended on him, to serve his necessities, and supply those ministerial offices which

(*a*) *Cave's Lives of the Apostles.*
et à St Lucâ pict. c. 18, 19.
(*f*) See the ensuing Appendix.

(*b*) Lib. ii. c. 43.
(*d*) *Grotius*, in Luke ii. 51.
(*g*) Acts xvi. 10.

(*c*) *De Imagine non Manuf.*
(*e*) Luke. i. 2.

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the apostle's confinement would not suffer him to undergo. Nay, it appears from a passage of St Paul (*a*) to Timothy, that he returned with him to Rome the second time, waiting on him in the same capacity, and especially in carrying messages to those churches where they had planted Christianity: Nor can we well forbear thinking that he continued his attendance on him until the apostle had finished his course, and crowned his ministry with his martyrdom; by which kind offices he infinitely endeared himself to St Paul, who owned him for his fellow-labourer, and called him the beloved physician, (*b*) and "the brother whose praise is in the Gospel throughout all the churches."

After the death of St Paul, how he disposed of himself is not so certain. Some are of opinion that he returned into the East, and in Egypt and Lydia preached the Gospel, wrought miracles, converted multitudes, and constituted guides and ministers of religion; but others rather think that he travelled into Dalmatia, Gallia, Italy, and Macedonia, where he spared no pains, nor declined any dangers, that he might faithfully discharge the trust committed to him. (*c*) Upon his coming into Greece, those who make him die a violent death (for some are of a contrary opinion) tell us, that he preached with great success, and baptized many converts into the Christian faith, till a party of infidels, making head against him, drew him to execution, and for want of a cross whereon to dispatch him, hanged him upon an olive tree, in the eightieth year of his age.

We have two pieces of his, viz. his Gospel, and the History of the Apostolic Acts, wrote for the use of the churches, and both dedicated to Theophilus: But who this Theophilus was it is not so easy a matter to determine, since many of the ancients themselves have taken this name in a general appellative sense, for a lover of God, a title common to every good Christian; but others (with better reason) have thought that it is the proper name of some person of distinction, since the title of Most excellent is annexed to it, which is the usual form of address to princes and great men. But who this person of distinction was it is impossible to tell, only we may suppose that he was some considerable magistrate, whom St Luke had converted, and to whom he now dedicated his books, not only as a testimony of honourable respect, but as a means of giving him a farther information of those things wherein he had instructed him.

(*d*) The occasion of his writing his Gospel was (as himself intimates) the rash and wrong accounts given to the world by some, who, either out of ignorance or design, had misrepresented the actions and doctrines of Christ, and sowed the seeds of error in the church*. It is certain that this evangelist is more circumstantial in relating the facts, and more exact in the method and order of them, than either of the two who wrote before him. (*e*) The history of Zacharias, the generation of John the Baptist, the angel's coming to the Blessed Virgin, Elizabeth's salutation of her at the first interview, the occasion of Joseph and Mary's going to Bethlehem, the circumstances of our Saviour's birth there, the publication of it to the shepherds, and the testimony which Simeon and Anna gave to him in the temple; these, and several other pieces of history, as well as the parables of the lost sheep, lost piece of money, and returning prodigal son, &c. are not related by any other evangelist. His history therefore is an excellent supplement of what they have omitted; nor does it in the least detract from the authority of his relations that he himself was not present at the doing of them: For if we consider who were the persons from whom he derived his account of things, he had a stock of intelligence sufficiently authentic to proceed upon; and when he had finished it, had the

(*a*) 2 Tim. iv. 11.

(*b*) 2 Cor. viii. 18.

(*c*) *Cave's Life of St Luke.*

(*d*) *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. iv.

* [St Luke does not charge those who had writ-

ten before him, either with misrepresenting the actions and doctrines of Christ, or with sowing the seeds of error in the church. See the *Appendix* to this Dissertation.]

(*e*) *Pool's Argument on St Luke.*

sanction and approbation of an apostle, divinely inspired (as himself likewise was), even of the great apostle of the Gentiles, to confirm it †.

Whoever looks into the beginning of St Luke's history of the apostolic Acts, may easily perceive that it is a continuation of what he had related in his Gospel; for it takes up the story at our Saviour's ascension, and continues it to St Paul's arrival at Rome after his appeal to Cæsar, and so, properly speaking, is but one history divided into two parts. The main difference between the Gospel and the Acts is, that in the former he writes from the information he had from others, but such as were true and authentic witnesses; in the latter, from his own knowledge and personal concern in the things he relates.

His chief design, in the composition of this work, was to write a true history of the apostles, and of the foundation of the Christian church, in opposition to the false acts and false histories which began then to be dispersed about the world. This history, however, does not comprise the acts of all the apostles, but confines itself chiefly to the most remarkable passages of two, St Peter and St Paul, and even of these two it gives us but a short and summary account. St Peter's story carries it down no lower than his deliverance from Herod's imprisoning him, and the death of his persecutor, which happened in the year of our Lord 44; and yet, the apostle lived four and twenty years after this. And in like manner, the History of St Paul is far from being complete. For, as from the time of his conversion, there is very little said of him, to his coming to Iconium, which was twelve years after; so his story proceeds no farther than to his first coming to Rome, in the year of our Lord 58, ‡ and yet, after this, he lived ten years; and, having preached the gospel in Spain, and other parts of the west, at last returned to Rome, and there suffered martyrdom.

(a) It must be owned, however, that the evangelist is more particular in his account of St Paul than of any other of the apostles, and that not only because he was more signally active in the cause of Christianity, but because St Luke was his constant attendant, an eye-witness of the whole carriage of his life, and privy to his most intimate transactions, and therefore capable of giving a more full and satisfactory relation of them.

(b) The evangelist's design, in short, was not to compose a large volume, but only to single out some few things which he thought necessary for the instruction of the faithful; and, in this respect, his work may be called an historical demonstration of the truth of the Christian religion, since therein we perceive our Lord's promises fulfilled, in his mission of the Holy Ghost, in his resurrection and ascension into heaven, in the sovereign power he exercises there, in the miracles he enabled his followers to work, in the rise and wonderful progress of his religion, and, in one word, in the Christian church becoming the church universal by the call to the Gentiles.

We have only one thing more to remark concerning this history, viz. That, as St Luke wrote it at Rome, [or in Greece (c)], and at the end of St Paul's two years imprisonment there, with which he concludes his story; so his way and manner of writing is exact and accurate; his style polite and elegant, sublime and noble, and yet easy and perspicuous, flowing with a natural grace and sweetness, admirably adapted to an his-

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

† [All these opinions respecting the conversion of St Luke to the faith by St Paul, and the era and origin of his gospel, were indeed long and very generally received; but notwithstanding this, many of them seem to be erroneous. See the *Appendix* to this Dissertation.]

‡ This and the following dates of ten years seem to be both erroneous. There is hardly room for doubt, but that it was A. D. 61 that St. Paul first

arrived as a prisoner at Rome, where he was detained two years, and liberated about the end of the year 63. He returned again towards the close of A. D. 64, and with St. Peter suffered martyrdom some time in the year following.]

(a) *Cave's Life of St Luke.*

(b) *Beausobre's Pref. sur les Actes des Apôtres.*

(c) *Lardner's Supplement, &c.*

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torical design, and, all along, expressed in a vein of purer and more refined language, than is to be found in the other writers of the sacred story.

St John, though the last in order, yet first in quality among the evangelists, was by birth a Galilean, the son of Zebedee and Salome, (one of those devout women who constantly attended our Lord in his ministry) and brother to James, who (to distinguish him from another apostle of the same name) is generally called James the Great. Before his adjoining himself to Christ, he seems to have been a disciple to John the Baptist, and is thought to have been that other disciple who (in the first chapter (*a*) of his gospel) is said to have been present with Andrew, when John declared Jesus to be the Lamb of God, and thereupon to have followed him to the place of his abode.

He was by much the youngest of the apostles, yet was he admitted into as great a share of his master's confidence as any. He was one of those to whom he communicated the most private passages of his life; one of those whom he took with him when he went and restored Jairus's daughter to life; one of those to whom he exhibited a specimen of his divinity in his transfiguration on the mount; one of those who were present at his conference with Moses and Elias, and heard that voice, which declared him "the beloved Son of God;" and one of those who were companions of his solitude, and most retired devotions and bitter agonies in the garden. Thus, of the three who were made the witnesses of their master's actions, which he saw convenient to conceal from the rest, St John had constantly the privilege to make one. Nay, even of these three, he seems, in some respects, to have the preference; to be known by the most desirable of all titles, "the disciple whom Jesus loved;" to have the honour of † leaning upon his Lord's bosom at meat; to have the intimacy with him to ask him a question, viz. (who in the company was the traitor?) which even St Peter himself had not courage to do; and (what is the highest instance of his affection) to have his mother, his sorrowful and disconsolate mother, with his last dying breath, committed to his care and comfort: (*b*) which peculiar tokens of his master's favour and esteem, some have ascribed to the apostle's eminent modesty, others to his unspotted chastity, others think it an indulgence due to his youth; but they seem to have the brightest notion who impute it to a nearness of relation, and a peculiar sweetness of disposition conspiring to recommend him.

(*c*) Upon the division of the provinces, which the apostles made among themselves, Asia fell to St John's share, though he did not immediately enter upon his charge, but stayed at Jerusalem, at least till the death of the Blessed Virgin, which was about fifteen years after our Lord's ascension. After he was thus released from his trust, he took his journey into Asia, and industriously applied himself to propagate Christianity, preaching where the Gospel had not yet taken place, and confirming it where it had been already planted. Many churches of note and eminence were of his foundation; but the chief place of his residence was at Ephesus, where, though St Paul had many years before settled a church, and constituted Timothy bishop of it, yet considering that it was a city of exceeding great resort, both upon the account of its traffic, and the conveniency of its port, the apostle thought he could not be seated more commodiously than here for dispersing the knowledge of his doctrines to natives of several nations and quarters at once.

After several years (some say twenty-seven) spent here, he was accused to Domitian (who had then begun a severe persecution) as a great asserter of atheism and impiety, and a public subverter of the religion of the empire; so that, by his command, the proconsul of Asia sent him bound to Rome, where, as Tertullian relates (in a manner importing the fact abundantly notorious), he was plunged into a cauldron of oil set on

(*a*) Ver. 35. 40.

† Among the eastern people the custom was not to sit on chairs, as it is with us, but to lie along at meals upon couches; so that the second lay with his head in the bosom of him that was before him.

(*b*) Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. i.

(*c*) Cave's Life of St John.

fire; but God, who had reserved him for farther services to the truth, restrained the heat of it (as he did in the fiery furnace of old), and so preserved him from this seemingly unavoidable destruction. The emperor, however, unmoved with his miraculous deliverance, ordered him to be banished to Patmos, a small desolate island in the Archipelago, where he remained several years, instructing the inhabitants in the faith of Christ; and where he was vouchsafed those visions and prophetic representations which he then recorded in his book of Revelation, reaping this great advantage from his exile, that though he was cut off from the society of men, he was the more entertained with immediate converse of heaven.

From the beginning of the Gospels to
Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

Upon the death of Domitian, and the succession of Nerva, who rescinded all the odious acts of his predecessor, and, by public edict, recalled those whom the other's fury had banished, St John took the opportunity to return into Asia, and fixed his seat at Ephesus; the rather because the people of that place had lately martyred their bishop Timothy. Here, with the assistance of seven other bishops, he took upon him the government of the large diocese of Asia Minor, erected oratories, and disposed of the clergy in the best manner that the circumstances of those times would permit; and having spent his time in an indefatigable execution of his charge, travelling from east to west to instruct the world in the principles of the holy religion which he was sent to propagate; and * shunning no difficulties or dangers, to redeem men's minds from vice, error, or idolatry, he finished his course, in the beginning of Trajan's reign, in a good old age, and, in the ninety-ninth year of his life, died a natural death, and was buried near Ephesus; a wonderful pattern of holiness and charity, and a writer so profound, as to deserve (by way of eminence) the character of St John the Divine.

The first in time, though placed last, is his Apocalypse, or book of Revelation, which he wrote in his confinement at Patmos. After the preface, and admonition given to the bishops of the seven churches in Asia, it contains the persecutions which the faithful suffered from the Jews, heretics, and Roman emperors, down as far as Julian the Apostate. After this we have a view of that vengeance which God has exercised against the persons of persecutors, against the Roman empire, and the city of Rome, which is described under the name of Babylon, the great prostitute, seated upon seven hills; then we have a description of the peaceable and flourishing state of the church for a thousand years, and, after some molestation from the Turk (as is supposed), the happiness of the church triumphant, set off with all the imaginable beauties of rhetoric; and, at last, we come to a formal conclusion of the whole matter, and a severe commination to all those who shall presume either to add or diminish any thing from this prophecy.

(a) That St John the evangelist was the author of the book of Revelation, all the most ancient ecclesiastical writers were agreed, until Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria,

* Eusebius (Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 23.) gives us a very remarkable instance of this.—In his visitation of the churches near Ephesus, he was much taken with a beautiful young man, whom he took, and, with a special charge, committed him to the education and instruction of the bishop of the place, who undertook the charge, instructed and baptized him. After this he thought he might a little relax the reins of discipline, but the youth made a bad use of his liberty, and, being debauched by evil company, made himself captain of a gang of highwaymen, the most loose, cruel, and profligate wretches of the country. St John, at his return, understanding this, and having sharply reproved the negligence of his tutor, resolved to find him out; and without any consideration of what danger he entered upon, in

venturing himself among men of desperate fortunes and abandoned consciences, he went to the mountains, where their usual haunt was; and being there taken by the centinel, he desired to be brought before their commander, who no sooner espied him coming towards him, but he immediately fled. The aged apostle followed after; but being not able to overtake him, he passionately entreated him to stay, promising to undertake with God for his peace and pardon. He did so, and both melted into tears; and the apostle having prayed with and for him, returned him a true penitent and convert to the church. *Cave's Life of St John.* [This story may be true; but St John's extreme age, and various other circumstances, render it very improbable.]

(a) *Beausobre's Pref. sur l'Apocalypse.*

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(in his answer to one Nepos, another Egyptian bishop, who had revived the gross notion of Cerinthus concerning the millenium, in order to evade the use which this Nepos had made of the Apocalypse), called in question its authority, by asserting, "that several of the ancients had disowned this book to have been wrote by any apostolic man; that Cerinthus had prefixed John's name to it, to give the better countenance to his dream of Christ's reign upon earth; and that (though it might be the work of some inspired person) it could not possibly be St John's, because its style, matter, and method, did by no means agree with his other writings." Now, whoever looks into the ancient writers of the church, will find that Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, who (according to (a) Irenæus) had seen St John; Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, who (according to (b) St Chrysostom) was conversant with the apostles; Justin Martyr, (c) Irenæus, (d) Clemens (e) of Alexandria, and Tertullian, (f) authors all of the second century, are unanimous in their ascribing this work to the same hand from whence the Gospel and Epistles did proceed; and that therefore the opinion of one private doctor should not prevail against the authority of so many writers, who were either contemporary, or nearly subsequent to the apostles. For, be it allowed that there is a diversity of style, yet does not every able writer vary that according to the nature of the subject he is upon? In history, the style should be simple; in epistles, familiar; and in prophecies, majestic and sublime; and therefore what wonder is it, if, in arguments so vastly different, the same person did not always observe the same tenor and way of writing? Nothing can be more different in their method and diction than the book of Proverbs and the book of Canticles, and yet few have doubted but that Solomon was the writer of both: But now, that Cerinthus should be the author of a book which contains doctrines directly opposite to the errors which he broached, is a thing incredible. For, whereas Cerinthus did not believe that God made the world, or that Christ died and rose again; the author of the Revelation (g) ascribes to God the work of the creation, and calls our Blessed Saviour (h) the first-begotten of the dead; and whereas Cerinthus made Jesus merely the son of Joseph, and a being different from that of Christ, the author of the revelation calls him expressly (i) the Son of God, and makes him (k) one and the same person with Christ. Though therefore there may be some similitude between St John's expressions and the notions of Cerinthus, in regard to Christ's reign of a thousand years, yet it had been much more prudent in Dionysius, to have given a spiritual sense and interpretation of these expressions, than to ascribe to a wicked and sensual man (as Cerinthus was) a book which breathes nothing but piety and holiness, an awful dread of God, and a devotion such as the angels perform in heaven.

The truth is, all circumstances concur to intitle our apostle to be the author of this book: his name frequently expressed in it; his writing it in the island of Patmos, whether none but he was banished; his directing particular epistles to the seven churches of Asia, which had either been planted or cultivated by him; and his styling himself "their brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ;" these, and many more circumstances that might be mentioned, added to the doctrine contained in it, which is highly suitable to the apostolic spirit and temper, do evidently bear witness that this book was the work of St John, and consequently of Divine and canonical authority*.

(a) Iren. lib. iii. c. 3.

(b) Hom. in Ignatium.

(c) Dial. cum Tryph.

(e) Strom. l.

(g) Chap. x. 6.

(i) Chap. ii. 18.

(d) Lib. iv. c. 37.

(f) De Resurrect. c. 58.

(h) Rev. i. 5.

(k) Chap. i. 5.

* [That the evangelist St John was the author of the *Apocalypse* has been lately proved, in a very sa-

tisfactory manner, against Michaelis, in ten letters addressed to Dr Marsh, and published in 1802, under the title of *The Evidence for the authenticity and Divine Inspiration of the Apocalypse*, stated; and vindicated from the objections of the late Professor J. D. Michaelis. I believe a second and much improved edition of those letters with their author's name has since been published; but I have seen only the first

(a) Next to the apocalypse, in order of time, are the three epistles which St John wrote. The first of these is catholic, calculated for all times and places, and contains most excellent rules for the conduct of the Christian life, and for preservation against the crafty insinuations of seducers. The other two are but short, and directed to particular persons: the one to a lady of honourable quality; and the other to the charitable and hospitable Gaius, so kind a friend, and so courteous an entertainer of all indigent Christians.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matt ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

(b) Eusebius, and after him St Jerom, informs us, that St John having perused the other three gospels, approved and confirmed them by his authority; but observing withal, that these evangelists had omitted several of our Saviour's actions, such especially as were done before the Baptist's imprisonment, he wrote his gospel in order to supply what was wanting in them: And because, at this time, there were several heretics (such as Cerinthus, Ebion, and their followers) sprung up in the church, who denied the Divine nature of Jesus Christ, another end of his writing was, to antidote the world against the poison of these heresies, by making it appear that our blessed Saviour was God from all eternity, and before his incarnation; (c) and that, as other evangelists had written the series of his generation according to the flesh, he might write a spiritual gospel, beginning from the Divinity of Christ: which was a subject reserved for him (as the most excellent person) by the Holy Ghost.

When therefore the bishops of Asia, and several ambassadors from other churches, had been for some time soliciting him, he caused them to proclaim a general fast, to seek the blessing of heaven on so great and momentous an undertaking; and when this was done, he set about the work, and † completed it in so excellent and sublime a manner, that the ancients generally resembled him to an eagle soaring aloft within the clouds, whether the weak eye of man was not able to follow him: For "as the evangelical writings (says (d) St Basil) transcend all the other parts of the Holy Scriptures, because in other parts God speaks to us by his servants the prophets; but in the gospels, our Lord, who is God blessed for evermore, speaks to us himself: so among all the evangelical preachers none is like St John, the son of thunder, for the sublimity of his discourses, beyond any man's capacity duly to reach and comprehend.

edition, which was to me perfectly conclusive, though I had my doubts of the authenticity of the *Apocalypse* before I read it, and even before I had seen the work of Michaelis. I have now no doubt of either the authenticity or the inspiration of that work; though I confess that I have no great confidence in some of its late interpreters even of great name.]

(a) *Cave's Life of St John.*

(b) *Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 24.*

(c) *Whitby's Preface to St John's Gospel.*

† His Gospel was originally wrote in Greek, but in Greek that abounds with Hebraisms, as do the other evangelists. His words are peculiar to himself, and his phrases used in an uncommon sense, which may possibly make his way of writing not so grateful to some nice masters of eloquence. In citing places from the Old Testament, though he sometimes makes use of the Septuagint, yet he usually translates from the Hebrew original, and generally renders them word for word: For being an Hebrew of the Hebrews,

and admirably skilled in the language of his country, this probably made him less exact in his Greek compositions, wherein he had no advantage besides what was immediately communicated from above. But what he wanted in the politeness of his style, was abundantly made up in the excellence and sublimity of his matter. *Cave's Life of St John.* [According to *Michaelis*, "St John's style is better and more fluent than that of the other evangelists; and it seems as if he had acquired a facility and taste in the Greek language from his long residence at Ephesus. His narrative is very perspicuous; and in order to promote perspicuity, the same word is sometimes repeated, though perhaps the advanced age, in which St John wrote, had some influence, since he is always inclined to repetitions." According to the same critic, "he is more plain and perspicuous in his narrative, than any other writer either of the Old or of the New Testament." *Marsh's Michaelis*, chap. 7. sect. 6. 8.]

(d) *Hom. xvi. Tom. i.*

APPENDIX TO DISSERATION I.

A. M. 4034,
&c. 5439.
Ann. Dom.
30, &c.
Vulg. Ær. 28.

[SINCE the period at which our Author published his History of the Bible, many questions, which were not then perhaps thought of, have been keenly and even acrimoniously agitated, about the origin of the three first gospels, the inspiration of the second and third, and the order in which they were published. This last question would indeed be of very little importance, were it not combined in some degree with the other two. If all the three were written under the superintendence of the Spirit of God, it can be of no consequence to the pious Christian which was written first—whether St Matthew wrote before St Mark and St Luke, or St Luke before St Matthew and St Mark; but if the evidence of the inspiration of St Luke, which has lately been controverted by divines of some eminence both in England and in Germany, be thought to depend in any degree on the resolution of that question, the question itself changes its nature, and becomes indeed of the greatest importance.

The most prevalent opinion perhaps is that which our author maintained, viz. that St Matthew wrote his Gospel for the use of the Jewish converts many years before St Mark and St Luke wrote their gospels; and this opinion is made to rest on the order in which the four Gospels have been generally published when collected together in one volume, and upon the concurring testimony of the earliest fathers of the Christian church, who mention the subject.

The concurring testimony of the fathers to the truth of any *fact* which fell under their own immediate observation, is entitled to the highest credit; but the order in which the Gospels have been generally arranged in the same volume, furnishes no proof whatever of the order of time in which they were respectively written, and separately published among the faithful. We know not indeed when or by whom they were first collected into one volume. If this was done by St John, he might be induced to place St Matthew's first on account of the dignity of its author in the church; and his own last, both from a principle of modesty, for which he is known to have been remarkable, and because his Gospel is so obviously supplemental to the other three, that without the previous perusal of some one of them—indeed I think without the previous perusal of St Matthew's or St Luke's—no man could, by reading St John's Gospel, acquire an adequate knowledge of “all that Jesus taught and did on earth till he was taken up into heaven.”

If the different Gospels were not collected into one volume till after the death of St John, and this is at least possible, he or they who undertook the task of arranging them, may have been guided by the same principles, which I have supposed likely to direct the arrangement of the apostle himself; and this is the more probable, that we know the arrangement of St Paul's epistles to have been directed by such principles, without regard to the order in which they were written. “The epistles which were sent to whole bodies of Christians have been generally placed before those which were sent to individuals; and of the former, the epistle to the Romans has had the first rank, because Rome was the capital of the empire. Next in order come the two epistles to the Corinthians, because Corinth was then the principal city of that part of Greece in which Christianity had made any progress; and the epistle to the Galatians is placed in the third rank, because it was addressed to a people inhabiting a country, which, though considered as less important than the cities of Rome and Corinth with

their respective dependencies, was deemed higher in rank than any other single city. Yet the epistles to the Galatians, Corinthians, and some others, were certainly, every one of them, written before that to the Romans, the epistle to the Galatians being probably the earliest of all St Paul's epistles that are now extant (a)."

From the beginning of the Gospels to
Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

That it was some such principle as this, and not the order of time in which the Gospels were written, that directed their arrangement when collected into one volume, may be inferred from the fact, that they are differently arranged in different manuscripts. "The Latin church arranged them thus,—Matthew, John, Luke, Mark; and their arrangement is observed, not only in the old Latin manuscripts, but likewise in the Codex Bezae (b)," one of the most ancient and valuable Greek manuscripts extant. From the order in which the Gospels are generally published, nothing therefore can be inferred with certainty respecting the priority of any one of them to the others.

The testimony of the ancients, were it unanimous and sufficiently early, would indeed be conclusive; but it is far from unanimous. The reports of the different writers have been collected with great industry by Lardner (c), to whom I therefore refer; and it will be seen, from a comparison of these reports, that the only points in which they seem to be all agreed, are, that St Matthew and St Luke wrote before St Mark and St John, and that the former wrote his Gospel in *Hebrew*. When I say that in these points they seem to be all agreed, I allude only to those who may be considered as the original reporters—such as *Papias, Ireneus, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Origen*; for those who succeeded them have added each some opinion of his own, though nothing, I think, to contradict the assertion of Clemens, that the evangelists, who give the different genealogies of our Lord, wrote their Gospels before the other two. Whether St Matthew or St Luke wrote first, must therefore be decided, if it can be decided at all, by the internal evidence afforded by their two Gospels themselves; and about the force of that evidence, modern divines of the greatest eminence have differed in opinion.

Calvin, Beza, Gomarus the antagonist of *Arminius, Lardner, Michaelis, Dr Macknight* of Edinburgh, and of late *Mr Dunster* ‡, seem all to have been decidedly of opinion that St Luke wrote before St Matthew; but by much the most general opinion is, I believe, that St Matthew was the first writer of a Gospel. Of those who have lately defended this opinion, the two most eminent writers are, Dr Owen, in his *Observations on the Four Gospels*; and Dr Townson, in his *Discourses on the Four Gospels*,—a work unquestionably of very great merit, and, according to the biographer of the author, the chief inducement which led the university of Oxford to confer on him the degree of doctor in divinity by diploma. In that work therefore we may reasonably look for the best arguments by which the common opinion has hitherto been supported; but I cannot say that the arguments of Dr Townson have convinced me. He contends not only that the Gospel by St Matthew was written the first of the four, but treading in the footsteps of *Theophylact*, and some others, he is of opinion that it was written and published about eight years after our Lord's ascension. So early a date, however, is at variance with the chief part of that external evidence, for the support of which the learned author professes to have brought forward what he considers as internal proofs fur-

(a) *Marsh's Michaelis*, vol. iv.

(b) *Ibid.* vol. iii. chap. 1. Note 1. by the Editor.

(c) *History of the Apostles and Evangelists*.

‡ The reverend Charles Dunster, M. A. rector of Petworth in Sussex, who has published four tracts on the subject, which have by no means attracted the attention, to which they are well entitled from every Biblical scholar. For this neglect two reasons may be assigned. The modest author, in every tract, proclaims himself to be a very inferior Greek scholar, and in comparison of those with whom he differs in

opinion, a mere *sciolist* in criticism; and the public, as usual in such cases, appears to have taken him at his word; though every page, in which that word appears, shews that his learning and industry are inferior only to his modesty. The second reason to which I attribute the general neglect of the tracts, is more solid; for it must be admitted that Mr Dunster has paid very little regard to *lucidus ordo* in writing, appearing to have committed his thoughts to paper just as they arose in his own mind.

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nished by the Gospels themselves; for Irenæus says expressly, that St Matthew published his Hebrew Gospel “while St Paul and St Peter were preaching at Rome—*τοῦ Πέτροῦ καὶ τοῦ Παύλου ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἐναγγελίζομενων* ;” and this could not be before the year 68 of our era *. Dr Townson, however, reasons in behalf of the early date of St Matthew’s gospel in the following manner.

“It was *expedient* for many reasons that a written history of Christ should appear, without much delay after his ascension. The apostles, therefore, as their great caution and reserve lead us to *infer*, determined, that one of their body, and for the present *one only*, should undertake and publish such a work; a work appealing to a multitude of living witnesses for many of its facts, and attested by the chosen witnesses in all its parts; and therefore *fit* to be recommended to their followers and converts as *a standard of truth*, by which the *credibility* of other relations might be examined and proved. This it was easy to preserve from interpolations or corruptions; since copies of it, taken by believers for their use, might be verified by the original remaining with the central church in Jerusalem. And for the sake of a like advantage, I apprehend the other Gospels were afterwards published in cities of great resort, and in which Christian churches, the depositories of the authentic manuscripts, were well established (a).”

Of the many reasons which made it, in the opinion of the excellent author, *expedient* that a history of Christ should be written early, and written by an apostle, he states ten in the succeeding section; but they are all reasons of *mere expediency* or *fitness*, and some of them such as will hardly appear expedient to men who have no hypothesis to support. Among them he has assigned no reason why the apostles determined that St MATTHEW should perform this great work in preference to PETER, JAMES, and JOHN, who were eye-witnesses of several important events in the life of our blessed Lord at which Matthew was not present. He has likewise neglected to account for St Luke’s thinking it necessary, or at least expedient, to write himself a Gospel for the use of Theophilus, who, according to this hypothesis, might have tried the truth of the narratives then in circulation, by a superior standard to any which an inferior minister of the Gospel could furnish. If the Gospel by St Matthew was written at so early a period by the command of the whole college of the apostles, there seems to have been no occasion for St Luke’s writing at all, for the purpose which he assigns in the address of his own Gospel to Theophilus, to whom it would have been his *duty* to send St Matthew’s Gospel, that his friend and patron “might know the certainty of those things in which he had been instructed.” At any rate, we may be sure that if St Luke had known any thing of a Gospel written by one apostle at the command of the whole college, and for the purpose which Dr Townson assigns, he would have addressed Theophilus in language very different from that which he has employed. Let me add too, that as many reasons, at least equally plausible, have been assigned by Lardner, Michaelis, Dr Marsh, and Mr Dunster, for the *expediency* of delaying to publish a written Gospel, till the period at which they suppose the three first Gospels to have been published. I forbear to state those reasons, because I most heartily adopt the following censure passed by Mr Churton on all such arguments founded on the supposed *expediency* of the Divine conduct in the administration whether of nature or of grace.

“Learned and ingenious men, says this respectable writer (b), frame to themselves

* See Marsh’s Michaelis, vol. iii. and Hales’s Analysis of Chronology, vol. 2d. page 676, &c. Dr Hales is of opinion, that St Matthew’s Gospel in Greek was the original, and the Hebrew Gospel mentioned by the fathers a translation from it; but in this opinion I believe the learned *analyst* to be singular. That the Greek Gospel by St Matthew is an original production and no translation, I am perfect-

ly satisfied; but that his Hebrew Gospel, mentioned by the fathers, was likewise original, seems to me in the highest degree probable for reasons to be stated by and bye.

(a) Townson’s Works, vol. i. Discourse iii. sect. 5.

(b) Introduction to the Works of Dr Townson, p. 94.

theories of what a Gospel should contain, [when it should be published], where it should begin, and where it should end; and then they pronounce, concerning the order and design of the existing Gospels, as they agree or disagree with those abstract rules and canons of their own devising. But this surely is a very false criterion. The ways of God are not as man's ways; and although those that search with meekness of understanding (for to such especially 'mysteries are revealed') may generally discover plain marks of wisdom, in the whole progress and several parts of Divine revelation; yet the manifestations which have been made, and the things which have been done, have very seldom been such as the wit of man would antecedently have concluded to be reasonable and proper."

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

These observations are just, and display the candour of him by whom they were made; for they are obviously and indisputably as applicable to the theory of Dr Townson, and the manner in which it is supported, as to any other theory which the author may have had more immediately in his eye. Let us therefore search in the Gospels themselves, and not in our own imaginations, for some *mark* or *fact*, if we can find it, tending to ascertain the order in which they were published. Now there are certainly two passages in St Matthew's Gospel, which were long ago pointed out by Dr Lardner as furnishing a complete proof, that they could not have been written at a period so early as eight or even fifteen * years after the ascension.

Giving an account of the remorse of Judas, and his returning the thirty pieces of silver, St Matthew says (a) that "the chief priests took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called the field of blood *unto this day*." Again, after informing us (b) that the chief priests and elders bribed the Roman soldiers to say that, while they slept on their post at the tomb of Jesus, his disciples came by night and stole his body, the evangelist adds,—“and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews *until this day*.” It is justly observed by Lardner, that the phrase *until this day* does not ascertain the precise length of time intervening between the fact recorded and the period of recording it; but surely, if we are to interpret this phrase in the New Testament according to the sense in which it is universally understood in the Old—a mode of interpretation which the biographer of Dr Townson strongly recommends by his own practice—it must in both places either be an interpolation, which has never been suspected, or imply that a much longer period than eight or even fifteen years had intervened between the resurrection of Christ and the writing of St Matthew's Greek Gospel.

If to this fact we add what is obviously implied in the preface to the Gospel by St Luke, no doubt, I think, can remain in our minds, but that the period at which St Matthew's Gospel was written, was as late, if the testimony of Irenæus be of any weight, as Michaelis and Dr Hales have placed it. St Luke speaks expressly of *many* who had *undertaken* to set forth in order a declaration of those things which were firmly believed and had certainly been done among the Christians; but the word which he employs unquestionably implies, that the undertakers had so far *failed*, as to render his own writing necessary for the satisfaction of Theophilus. The word is ἐπιχειρῆσαι, which, according to Schleusner, occurs but thrice in the New Testament:—Luke i. 1. Acts ix. 29. xix. 13; and as all these texts were written by the same author, it is surely reasonable to suppose, that the verb ἐπιχειρῶ is in them used in the same sense. But in

* Some of the ancients supposed, I forget on what ground, that St Matthew wrote his Gospel fifteen or sixteen years after the ascension; and those who believe that he did not write till thirty or thirty-two years after that event, hence infer, that the supposed expediency of an early written Gospel induced them first to divide the real time that elapsed between the

ascension and the writing of the first Gospel, and then, still thinking the period of fifteen or sixteen years too long, to divide that period likewise, and fix upon the eighth year after the ascension for the writing of St Matthew's Gospel.

(a) Chap. xxvii. 7, 8.

(b) Chap. xxviii. 12—16.

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the two places in the Acts of the apostles, it unquestionably implies unsuccessful attempts; for though the Grecians “went about to slay St Paul—ἐπιχειροῦν αὐτὸν ἀνελεῖν”—they were prevented from carrying their design into execution by the care of the brethren, who brought the apostle from Jerusalem to Cesarea, and thence sent him to Tarsus. And when the vagabond Jewish exorcists “took upon them—ἐπιχείρησαν—to adjure an evil spirit by that Jesus (τὸν Ἰησοῦν) whom Paul preached,” they were so far from succeeding in their enterprise, that the man possessed “leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of the house naked and wounded*.”

I know it is said, and it is true, that St Luke passeth no direct censure upon those who had attempted to write a regular narrative of those things which had been done or finished among the Christians, and were by them firmly believed; and I know that it is likewise said that ἐπιχειρέω is employed to express the making of an attempt, whether it be crowned with success or not; and for any thing that I know to the contrary, this may likewise be true, though all the examples in the Lexicons which I have consulted, I have found in the works in my possession from which they were taken, to be of attempts either unsuccessful or made by no competent authority. Let me add, in the words of Dr Marsh, that “to the accounts of those *many*, who had written before him, St Luke must certainly have had some objection to make, for no man would argue thus:—Since several persons have delivered accounts of Christ, *on which perfect reliance may be placed*, I have likewise thought proper to write the history of Christ! We must conclude therefore, that his intention was to correct the inaccuracies of the accounts which were then in circulation, and to deliver to Theophilus a true and genuine document, in order to silence idle stories, which might have prejudiced Theophilus against the Christian religion.” At any rate, it is indisputable that in two, out of the three instances in which he employs the verb ἐπιχειρέω, it is to signify the making of unsuccessful attempts; and it is surely improbable that so great a master of the Greek language as he is confessed to have been, would have expressed by that word, St Matthew’s or St Mark’s attempts to write a history of the doctrines and miracles of their Divine master. It seems therefore to be unquestionable, that St Luke, when addressing Theophilus, had never heard of either of their Gospels; and yet it is inconceivable, that St Matthew’s should not have reached either him or St Paul in the long period of more than twenty years, if it had been written, as Dr Townson supposes, by the command of the whole college of apostles to be the standard of truth, by which the credibility of all other relations of the same things might be examined and proved.

The reader will observe that this argument does not prove St Luke’s Gospel to have been written *before* St Matthew’s. It proves only that St Luke had never seen St Matthew’s or St Mark’s Gospel; and that if these were written before his, the interval of time must have been very short. That St Luke’s was the first published Gospel—or at least that it was published before the *Greek* Gospel of St Matthew, I am strongly inclined to believe; but if it has been proved that St Luke did not *copy* from St Matthew (for that an apostle should copy from an inferior evangelist is too absurd to be supposed), I consider it as a question of no importance which of them was the earliest writer. Those who think otherwise, may consult Lardner’s History of the Apostles and Evangelists, with Churton’s edition of Townson’s Discourses on the four Gospels on the one hand, and Dr Macknight’s Harmony of the Gospels, with Dunster’s Tracts on St Luke’s Gospel on the other.

But if St Luke never saw the Gospels of St Matthew and St Mark, and was not even a disciple of Christ, having been converted, as is generally supposed, by St Paul, what better opportunities had he of perfectly understanding all things from the very

* The word is used in the same sense of making unsuccessful attempts in Esther ix. 25. and 2 Maec. vii. 19.

first, than those who had taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which had been certainly accomplished among the Christians, and were firmly believed by them? He admits that the writers to whom he alludes, derived the materials of their narratives from those “who, from the beginning, were eye-witnesses of the life, miracles, death, and resurrection of our Blessed Lord, and likewise the appointed ministers of his word;” and in the opinion of many eminent critics, he seems to say that he derived the substance of his own narrative from no other source.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

That St Luke was not an apostle is unquestionable; and it cannot be denied that, in the opinion of the greater number of the ancients, whose writings have come down to us, he was not even a personal disciple of Christ. This however was not the opinion of *all* the ancients. Epiphanius certainly, and Origen, as quoted by Dr Whitby (*a*), believed him to have been not only a disciple, but also one of the seventy whom “the Lord sent two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.” Many others were of the same opinion; but as they are not agreed among themselves, I refer the reader to Lardner’s History of the Apostles and Evangelists, in which their different reports are collected with the learned author’s usual candour.

From the earliest of these reports, which probably laid the foundation of many which follow, it appears that the opinion of St Luke’s not being a disciple of Christ, was drawn by *inference* from his own words in his address to Theophilus. “The apostles, says Irenæus, envying none, delivered plainly to all the things which they had learned from the Lord. So likewise *Luke*, envying no man, has delivered to us what he learned from them, as he says;—*Even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word* ‡.

It is evident from this passage, if the Latin translation can be depended on ‡², that Irenæus derived his opinion—not from *Polycarp* or *Papias*, or from any general *tradition of the church*, but from the words of St Luke himself, which it is certainly possible that even he may have misunderstood. These words have indeed been taken in the same sense by many eminent scholars among the moderns; but however presumptuous I may be thought, I cannot help, in opposition even to such great authorities, agreeing with Dr Whitby, that the words of the evangelist, far from affording ground for the inference which has been drawn from them, “plead powerfully for St Luke’s personal knowledge, or such knowledge as the apostles themselves possessed, of all the things which he has recorded in his Gospel.” He says indeed, that “others had undertaken to set forth in order a narrative of all those things which are most surely believed,—or rather, which have assuredly been *performed* or *accomplished* (πεπληροφορημένων) (*b*) among us, even as they delivered them to us, who from the beginning were eye-witnesses (of the things done) and *appointed* ministers of the Word (preached) καθὼς παρέδωκαν ἡμῖν οἱ ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρεταὶ γερόμενοι τοῦ λόγου; but it is evident, as we have already seen, that he thought those writers unequal to the task which they had undertaken. They were probably well-meaning, pious, and zealous men, who had diligently attended to the preaching of the apostles, taken notes of their discourses, and from these notes written memoirs of the life, miracles, and doctrines of our Saviour; for such were beyond all question,

(*a*) Preface to St Luke’s Gospel.

‡ Apostoli simpliciter nemini invidentes quæ didicerant ipsi a Domino hæc omnibus tradebant. Sic igitur et Lucas nemini invidens, ea quæ ab eis didicerat, tradidit nobis, sicut ipse testatur dicens; *Quemadmodum tradiderunt nobis qui ab initio contemplatores et ministri fuerunt verbi.* *Adver. H. lib. 3. cap. 14. n. 2.*

‡² As the original work is lost, we have no means

of ascertaining the fidelity of the translation, which, in the opinion of Cave, was made about the end of the fourth century. The same learned author, characterising the translation, says—*Vetusta satis, sed barbara imprimis, difficilis et salebrosa.*

(*b*) See Whitby on the place, Campbell’s translation of the Gospels, and Parkhurst’s Lexicon on the word πληροφωρίω.

A. M. 4034,
&c. or 5439.
Ann. Dom.
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the things which St Luke, in his adress to Theophilus, says, "have been accomplished, and are surely believed among us."

But whom does the evangelist include under the word *us*, among whom, he says, that those things were believed, and to whom the appointed ministers of the Word had preached * them? Surely more than himself and his friend—more than those men, who from that oral teaching had taken in hand to write Gospels, more indeed than any private society, even the whole body of Christians then in the world. Such is the sense of *we* and *us* in almost every verse of the New Testament, where the meaning of the word is not obviously limited by the context. Thus, when St Stephen, addressing the Jewish council, says, (a) "*our* fathers received the lively oracles to give unto *us*," he cannot be supposed to mean that those oracles were to be given only to himself and those to whom he was speaking, to any private party, or to any particular generation of the Jews, but to the whole descendants of Israel through all generations, and even to the Christian church after them. When St Paul writes thus to the Romans; (b) "Therefore being justified by faith *we* have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also *we* have access by faith into this grace wherein *we* stand;" and again—"Hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in *our* hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto *us*," he does not mean by the words, *we*, *our*, and *us*, that only himself and those whom he was immediately addressing, partook of those blessings, which he well knew were to be vouchsafed to the Christian church through all ages even unto the end of the world. Again, when the same apostle says to the Corinthians, (c) that "God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up *us*, by his own power," he could not be supposed to mean that only himself and the people to whom he was writing were to be raised from the dead; for in a following chapter of the same epistle, he expressly says, that "since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead;" and that "as in Adam *all* die, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive." When the appointed ministers of the word were delivering those things which had been accomplished and were firmly believed in the Christian community, they were not furnishing—at least it was not their *intention* to furnish, either St Luke or any other individual with materials for writing a Gospel. They were merely obeying the last command of their Divine Master, who "said unto them, (d) Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

From the materials furnished by that preaching, many indeed had taken in hand to write in order an account of the things which had been done, and taught, and suffered, by our Blessed Lord; but, however well meant their attempts may have been, they had succeeded so ill, that St Luke judged it expedient to write a Gospel himself for the satisfaction of Theophilus, and, no doubt, of the church at large. The reason which he assigns for his undertaking is, that he had "perfect understanding of all things (i. e. of all the things which were most surely believed among the Christians) from the very first;" but the words—καθὼς παρέδοσαν ἡμῖν οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται relate not to his knowledge, but to the source of the information of those who had taken in hand to set forth in order the narratives which he had just mentioned; and he is so far from saying that he had derived his knowledge through the same channel with them, that, though he was undoubtedly a constant attendant on the apostles preaching, his whole address implies, what the word παρηκολουθηκότι must therefore mean, that he had been an eye and an ear witness of all which he was about to relate; for if this be not its meaning, how could Theophilus derive more certain knowledge from St Luke's narrative than from those which were already in circulation, and on which no censure had been passed.

* Παρέδοσαν ἡμῖν. See, on the word Schleusner, clause here signifies *quemadmodum narrarunt nobis et who proves completely, that among its different meanings one is to deliver by oral teaching, and that the* tradiderunt.

(a) Acts vii. 38.

(b) Ch. v. 1—6.

(c) 1 Cor. vi. 14.

(d) St Mark xvi. 15.

The verb παρακολουθῶ, being compounded of παρα and ἀκολουθῶ, as ἀκολουθῶ again is derived from ἀκολουθός, an attendant, companion, or observer, can be properly employed only by one, who has constantly attended, as a companion, or observed as an eye or ear witness, some person or thing; for it is employed to denote the observation or attendance of things and doctrines, as well as of persons (a). Thus, Plato in *Phædro*, says ἀκολουθεῖν τῷ λόγῳ—in-telligentia consequi orationem—to attend with understanding to the discourse or doctrine. The historian Josephus asserting his own credit says—(b) “Every one, who undertakes to deliver the history of actions—πράξεων—truly, ought to know them accurately—ἀκριβῶς—himself in the first place, as either having been present with them—concerned in them—when done, or been informed of them by those who knew them—ἢ παρηκολουθηκότα τοῖς γεγενοσιν ἢ παρὰ τῶν εἰδότεων πυνθανομένων. Now to both these means of knowledge I may pretend in the composition of my two works.” Our Lord, in St Mark’s Gospel, says (c)—Σημεῖα δὲ τοῖς πιστεύουσι ταῦτα παρακολουθήσει—signa autem eos qui crediderint, hæc sequentur (consequentur according to Beza) “and these signs shall follow (attend) them that believe.” St Paul writing to Timothy, says (d)—“If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ nourished up in the words of faith, and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained—ἣν παρακολούθηκας—which thou hast hitherto followed, or to which thou hast hitherto attended;” again he says (e)—“Thou hast fully known (σύ παρακολούθηκας) my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long suffering, charity, patience, &c. but how did Timothy know St Paul’s doctrine, manner of life, purpose, &c.? Was it by the declaration (παράδοσις) of others—certain favoured disciples of the apostle, or by attending on his journeyings and ministry himself? This question admits of but one answer:—Timothy was, for a long time, the apostle’s constant companion, and called his son in the faith, who heard his doctrine with his own ears, and witnessed his manner of life with his own eyes, and thus acquired a perfect knowledge of both. Why then should we suppose that St Luke meant any other kind of knowledge of the things which he was about to write to Theophilus, than St Paul, using the same word, says that Timothy had of his (the apostle’s) doctrine and manner of life? St Luke was a companion of St Paul and one of his fellow-labourers; they were both well skilled in the Greek language; the style of the one is thought to have a strong resemblance to that of the other; they were both acquainted with the writings of the Greek philosophers; they both use the word παρακολουθῶ to express the having a perfect knowledge of things. St Paul unquestionably uses it in the same sense in which it hath been used by Plato and Josephus; and can we imagine that his friend, companion, and, as is generally supposed, his pupil, used it in a quite different sense—in a sense, which would give to himself no superiority over those who had written defective Gospels before him?

The things which had been fulfilled and were firmly believed among Christians—τὰ πεπληροφορημένα ἐν ἡμῖν πράγματα, were the πράγματα, not of the apostles or appointed ministers of the Word, who preached those things to every creature, but “all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day that he was taken up, after that he, through the Holy Ghost, had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen.” This, St Luke himself (f) declares was the subject of his Gospel, as it appears indeed to be in the Gospel still extant; but of the things recorded in his Gospel he assures us that he had the same kind of knowledge that Timothy had of the doctrine and life of St Paul, and that Josephus had of the origin, progress, and issue, of the Jewish war; but the knowledge of Timothy in the one case, and of Josephus in the other, was unquestionably personal—what each had seen and heard; and therefore St Luke’s knowledge of all that Jesus did and taught must have been personal likewise—what

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

(a) See *Scopula* and *Schleusner* on the word.

(d) 1 Tim. iv. 6.

(e) 2 Tim. iii. 10.

(b) *Cont. Apion.* l. i. c. 10.

(f) Acts i. 1, 2.

(c) Ch. xvi. 17.

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he had seen with his own eyes, and heard with his own ears. St Luke therefore must have been a disciple of Christ himself, and an exact observer of all his words and actions; † and if so, it is extremely probable that he was likewise one of the seventy. He is the only evangelist who gives an account of the appointment of the seventy, (though St Matthew evidently alludes to it (a)); and he even dwells longer on their appointment and commission than he does on the call of the twelve apostles, and a similar commission given to them. This was extremely natural if he was himself one of the seventy, but appears to us almost unaccountable if he was not. The apostles were, as ministers of the Word, superior to the seventy: their commission was permanent, which the commission of the seventy seems not to have been; and they were admitted to a closer intimacy with their Divine Master. Had St Luke been only one of that promiscuous multitude of disciples, which followed our Lord, and much more had he derived all his knowledge of our Lord's preaching and miracles from the report of others, he would surely have given a more detailed account of the success of the higher order of ministers than of the lower; but if he was one of the seventy himself, it was extremely natural to expatiate most fully on events *quorum pars magna fuit*.

Mr Dunster has urged some very cogent arguments in support of the opinion that St Luke was one of the two disciples, to whom our Blessed Lord joined himself, almost immediately after his resurrection, in the way to Emmaus. This opinion is not new. It was the opinion of *Theophylact*, and, as he informs us, of others among the ancients; it was adopted by Basnage among the moderns; and Lardner declares that it has a high degree of probability. The chief ground on which Basnage rests his opinion, is the concealment of the name of one of those disciples, *Cleophas* being mentioned by St Luke as the other. St Mark barely mentions the interview between Christ and two of the disciples, as they were going into the country; but he does not give the name of either, which probably he had never heard; St Peter being overpowered by the appearance vouchsafed, on the same day, to himself, and the rest of the apostles, with the visit to themselves that very evening, just as the two disciples arrived from Emmaus. St Luke, however, gives a very particular and interesting account of all that passed between Christ and the two disciples both on the road and in the village; and as he mentions *Cleophas* by name, we can hardly suppose him to be ignorant of the name of the other. He conceals it, however, probably for the same reason that St John conceals his own name in his own Gospel. Such is the reasoning of Basnage; and Mr Dunster adds great force to it by observing, I think justly, that the conversation between Cleophas and his companion, when they said to each other—"Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" displays such traits of nature and such warmth of feeling, as no relater could have displayed, but he who actually felt what he described. I have therefore no doubt, but that St Luke himself was the companion of *Cleophas* when they two were so highly favoured by their Divine Master.

His being the companion of Cleophas, however, does not prove that he was one of the seventy, though Epiphanius ranks them both among those distinguished disciples; and I am perfectly aware that if he was, as some of the ancients say, a Syrian by birth, and a convert from heathenism, he could be neither the one nor the other. But there is, in the annals of the church, no evidence which can be depended on that St Luke was a Syrian by birth; and there is in the New Testament very sufficient evidence, that wherever he may have been born, he had been, by religion at least, a Jew before

† Since this sheet was prepared for the press, I chanced to turn up the following passage in Eusebius, which shews, beyond all controversy, that, in the opinion of that learned father, *παράκολουθω* signifies to have personal knowledge. Speaking of St Mark as

the disciple of St Peter, the historian says—*οὗτος γὰρ ἔχουσι τοῦ Κυρίου, οὗτος παρακολουθεῖ αὐτῷ.* *Ecl. Hist.* lib. 3. cap. 39.

(a) Ch. ix. 36, &c.

he became a *Christian*. It is justly observed by Lardner, that as St Luke was the constant companion of St Paul, and especially at Jerusalem, some exceptions would there have been made to him, as we know were made to Timothy and Titus, had he been an uncircumcised Gentile; but nothing of this kind appears either in the Acts of the Apostles or in any of St Paul's epistles. It is worthy of observation too, that in all his dates St Luke follows the Jewish computations of time, which we can hardly suppose that he would have done had he been himself a Gentile Christian, writing, as he certainly did chiefly write, for the instruction of Gentile converts. But if St Luke was an early disciple of Christ*; if he was one of the seventy, or the companion of Cleophas on the road to Emmaus, there is no room for doubt but that he was one of the hundred and twenty disciples, who (Acts i. 15. ii. 1. 4.) "were all with one accord in one place, when there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire sitting upon each of them, when they were all filled with the Holy Ghost (a);" so that, in respect of plenary inspiration, St Luke, though inferior in dignity, was "not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles."

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

We have therefore every reason to believe that St Luke, if not the earliest writer of a Gospel, knew nothing of St Matthew's or St Mark's Gospel when he sat down to write his own; that he wrote, as well as they, under the superintendence of the Spirit of God; and that he was equally with St Matthew an eye and ear witness of what he relates. There are indeed, in his and St Matthew's Gospels, several things related *ἀπ' ἀρχῆς*—"from the very first," of which neither of them nor any other evangelist could have been an eye-witness—such as the annunciation; the prediction of the birth of John the Baptist; the punishment of Zacharias for his unbelief; the presentation of Christ in the temple; the coming of the wise men from the east; the massacre of the innocents at Bethlehem; our Lord's disputing, when only twelve years old, with the doctors in the temple; and his temptation by the devil in the wilderness. All these things must have been either revealed immediately from heaven to St Luke, as some suppose to be implied in the word *ἀπ' ἀρχῆς*, or he must have learned them either immediately from the Blessed Virgin, who had long pondered them in her heart, or from the apostle St John, to whom it is natural to suppose that she would communicate them all, during her residence in his house, after being deprived of her Divine Son. This last hypothesis appears to me more probable than that they were immediately revealed to the evangelist himself; because I believe that revelations were seldom made of things which might have been easily discovered by natural means; but should any one think differently I will have no controversy with him on such a point. They were, in all probability, revealed from heaven to St Paul; for though I do not believe that the Gospel, which he says (b) "was taught to him by the revelation of Jesus Christ," contained merely a statement of those great events in the life and death of our Lord, with which every intelligent Jew must have been well acquainted, yet I think the incarnation and miraculous conception of our Lord must have been revealed to him, because

* That he was not only a personal but an early disciple of Christ, Mr Dunster produces many internal proofs from his Gospel. As I am in this Dissertation straitened in room, I shall select only one, which when first pointed out to me made a very strong impression on my own mind. "The account of our Lord's actually commencing his ministry in the city of Nazareth, where he had been brought up, is related by none of the other evangelists, being only slightly referred to by St Matthew. But the particular circumstances of our Lord standing up to read; of the book being delivered to him; of his opening it; of his closing it and giving it again to the minister; of his sit-

ting down; of the eyes of all being fastened upon him;—these are all related by St Luke, in a certain manner, which conveys to us strongly that every thing which is here related to have passed, actually did pass in the presence of the writer; and that all these successive actions were by various incidental circumstances, of look, manner, and effect, indelibly impressed on his mind." *Discursory Considerations on St Luke's Preface and other circumstances of his Gospel, in three Letters to a Friend, p. 114.*

(a) See Lightfoot and Whitby on these texts.

(b) Gal. i. 12.

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he could not, while a persecuting Jew, have derived the knowledge of them from any other source; and they are essential truths of the Gospel which he was, by Jesus Christ, commissioned to preach. What St Luke relates of the birth and early life of our Lord, he *may* therefore have learned from St Paul; or it *may* have been immediately revealed to himself; or, which I think the most probable opinion, he may have learned it either from the Blessed Virgin herself, or from St John, to whom it was by her undoubtedly communicated.

From the whole of this investigation it appears, I think, evident, that nothing in St Luke's Gospel was received by him from the παραδοσις of others, but what all the other evangelists must have received in the same manner; or if *they* were immediately inspired with the knowledge of such things as they did not actually either hear or see, there is reason to believe that *St Luke* was inspired with the knowledge of such things likewise. If he was one of the hundred and twenty on whom the Holy Ghost fell on the day of Pentecost, this will be admitted by the most sceptical theologian even in Germany, who admits any *part* of the New Testament to have been written by inspiration; but whether our evangelist was of that number or not, it is a fact recorded in various places of the Acts of the Apostles, that the Holy Ghost was given to many by the imposition of apostolical hands, and to others without the intervention of any such ritual ministration.

On the Gospel of St Mark I have very little to add to that which has been said by our author. That St Mark, though certainly a Jew by birth, and probably an occasional follower of our Lord, as many of his unbelieving countrymen were, was however not a regular and permanent disciple, is affirmed by all the most eminent writers of antiquity. Papias, Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Jerome, and Eusebius, &c. unite in representing him as the convert of St Peter, from whose mouth he wrote his Gospel, submitting it when finished to the apostle's revision; and there is in the Gospel itself much internal evidence of this being a true state of the case: St Mark, however, appears to have been a very early convert to the faith after our Lord's ascension; and that he wrote under the influence of the Spirit of God, has never been called in question till of late that some Lutheran divines in Germany, desirous, as it appears to me, of getting rid of inspiration altogether, have, by an arbitrary canon of their own, confined the gift of inspiration to the apostles and those who were with them on the day of Pentecost, when they were miraculously enabled to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. That this is a groundless hypothesis must be admitted by every man who believes the book called *the Acts of the Apostles* to be true history, whether its author was inspired or not; but as I do not suppose that *matters of fact*, of which the knowledge could be obtained by natural means, were ever miraculously revealed from heaven, it is surely reasonable to believe the unanimous testimony of the early fathers, that St Mark received the materials of his history from St Peter.

That he wrote with St Matthew's Gospel lying before him, and merely copied his narrative from it, is an opinion which I am very unwilling to admit, though it has been maintained by many other eminent and pious divines as well as by our author. Some indeed have gone so far as to contend with earnestness that St Mark transcribed literally from St Matthew, and that St Luke, whom they suppose to have written after them, transcribed likewise without acknowledgment from both!

This, to say the least of it, was surely very dishonourable conduct, and totally unlike that of the writers of the historical parts of the Old Testament, who candidly appeal to the records of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, from which the facts which they relate were taken. But this is not all that may be objected to this hypothesis. If St Mark and St Luke had St Matthew's Gospel lying before them, especially if that Gospel was written by the command of the whole college of the apostles, for the purpose supposed by Dr Townson, what inducement could the two later evangelists have to

write Gospels at all? St Luke's conduct, as we have already seen, must, on that supposition, have been a presumptuous deviation from his duty; and the task which St Mark undertook, must, I should think, appear to every unprejudiced man to have been at least useless. It is indeed very true that St Luke relates many important things in the earlier life of our Saviour which St Matthew has omitted; and it is equally true that St Mark's Gospel contains several important, though short, additions to the accounts given by St Matthew; but the former of these evangelists might have supplied the deficiencies which he wished to supply, by prefixing an introduction to the Gospel of his supposed precursor; and the latter by notes or an appendix.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ii. 8.
Mark xi. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

Should it be said that the practice of one man's editing the works of another, and prefixing an introduction or adding an appendix to them, is a modern invention, to which the evangelists were strangers, it will surely be granted that the second and third, supposing them to have had the first Gospel before them, might each have published a Gospel of his own on the plan that was afterwards adopted by St John. There is every reason to believe that the three first Gospels were before him when he wrote his own; but instead of going over the same ground with them, and transcribing from them, he either passes over what they contain altogether, or when he is obliged to mention some of the facts which had been mentioned in them, in order to give consistency and connection to his own narrative, he relates those facts in the fewest words possible, insisting on them no longer than was necessary to connect his own narrative, and render it intelligible to his reader. Had St Luke and St Mark, supposing them to have had St Matthew's Gospel before them when writing their own, adopted any one of these methods, they would at least have supported the authority and credit of the apostle—evangelist, by their own testimony to its truth; whereas, if they copied his words without acknowledgment, they can nowhere have added to his authority, whilst, in the few places in which they apparently differ from him in circumstances, however unimportant, they lessen not *his* credibility only, but also *their own*. It has indeed been asserted with great vehemence, that the hypothesis of the three first evangelists copying from each other gives greater credibility to their united testimony, than they would have been entitled to claim, had they all written without the knowledge of what each of the others had written before him. On what law of human thought this maxim is founded, I know not; but I apprehend it to be contrary to the principles by which courts of justice are guided in the examination of witnesses. By the law of Scotland no man can be admitted as a witness in any cause, whether civil or criminal, who has heard a preceding witness give evidence in that cause; and I believe the same practice prevails in courts-martial, both military and naval. On what principle was this regulation introduced into all judicial proceedings in Scotland, and into all courts-martial in England? Undoubtedly in the first instance to prevent wilful collusion or concert among the witnesses, especially in trials of which they might be deeply interested in the issue; but had this been the sole motive for such a regulation in the taking of evidence, it would probably have been introduced, at least into all criminal courts in England, in which I believe the practice of excluding the witnesses from each other does not prevail. Another inducement for the introduction of such a practice appears therefore to me to have been, to make sure of the testimony of each witness being given from his own *personal* knowledge; for of this no court can be sure in which the witnesses are examined in the presence of each other. Circumstances of the greatest importance to the cause at issue may have escaped from the *recollection* of one witness, till they were recalled to it by the narrative of another previously examined in his hearing; and other circumstances which perhaps had wholly escaped his *observation*, may be so closely connected with those which he distinctly remembers as to appear to him when he hears them related in detail, to be part of that which he originally saw or heard. In both these cases, however, but more especially in the last, the testimony of *two*, or even of *twenty* witnesses, should so

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many concur in swearing to such circumstances, would in reality be the testimony of but *one* witness, and would be considered as nothing more by the judge and jury, could they ascertain that the testimony of the second and third or twentieth witness was suggested by the narrative of the first. As the most acute man on earth cannot discern the secrets of his neighbour's heart, it was probably to prevent this *innocent* collusion, if I may use such an expression, that the examination of witnesses in the presence of each other has been so strictly prohibited by the law of Scotland, and likewise by the military code of England; for it is needless to attempt by human laws to prevent those who disregard the awful obligation of an oath from entering into *wilful* concerts for the perversion of justice, if they have it in their power to do so, and think that it would promote their own interest.

But if two or three men giving oral evidence in a court of justice, and each merely repeating what had been said by him or them who had been examined before him, would by their united testimony add nothing to the credibility of the first witness; does it not follow that the testimony of three men writing a history of the same events, and each transcribing from the narratives of him or them whose works are lying before him, is no greater authority, in the points in which they all agree, than the individual testimony of the earliest writer? What it is in the points in which they appear not to be *perfectly* agreed, we shall see by and bye.

It has indeed been said (*a*) that this method, followed by the evangelists, of "copying from each other, tended to preserve the integrity of their inestimable records, when a Gospel could not only be collated in several copies, but could also be compared with another Gospel, which in a great variety of passages, and in many remarkable words, was *aliud et idem*." But, on the supposition of the one copying from the other, the three Gospels are in that variety of passages, not *aliud et idem*, but *unum et idem*; and therefore the collation of Gospels only nominally different could produce no greater security for a genuine reading than the collation of a number of manuscripts of the same Gospel. The writer, who thinks it of so much importance that the evangelists should have copied from each other, adds, that "it appears to have been the intention of heaven that every inspired writer should be a *separate and distinct* voucher of the truth of the dispensation of the glorious and everlasting Gospel;" and in this opinion I most cordially agree with him. It is the opinion which I have cherished ever since I was deeply interested in such subjects. But while I hold this opinion, and I hope to hold it to the end of my life, it is impossible that I can believe that the later writers of Gospels copied from the former without acknowledgment; and that they did so, because, "Had they expressly *quoted* what had been already written on the subject, it would have *seemed to imply a want of authority* in the writer who fortified his narrative by such quotation; as if without this collateral aid, he was not, fully and beyond all exception or suspicion, a competent witness*." To me it appears that the very reverse of all

(*a*) *Brit. Crit.* vol. xl. p. 295.

* This apology for the concealed plagiarism of the evangelists is very similar to the reasoning of those fatalists, who attempt to reconcile their own principles to the common sense of mankind, by saying, "that though man is in truth a *necessary agent*, having all his actions determined by fixed and immutable laws; yet this being *concealed* from him, he acts with the conviction of being a *free agent*." That is, the Author of nature has concealed from mankind that they are *necessary*, in order that they may believe themselves *free* and accountable for their moral conduct; but those sagacious fatalists have defeated

his design by *discovering his secret* and revealing it to the world! In like manner, the evangelists forbear to acknowledge their quotations from each other, that "every one of them might appear to be fully and beyond all suspicion a competent witness," which, in his own opinion, it seems, would not have been the case, had he acknowledged his quotations! Their secret, however, has been discovered, and their plagiarisms detected; but the discoverers have assured us, that we have nothing to dread from the discovery, since the evangelists were in a great mistake when they suspected that by *avowedly quoting* from each other's writings they should lessen the authority of the whole!

this would have been the consequence, had they quoted expressly. Had St Luke appealed to St Matthew, supposing St Matthew to have written before him, for the truth of all those many things in which they perfectly agree, adding, that he was himself present on the occasion as well as the apostle; and had he said of such things as St Matthew has recorded but he has omitted, that he had no doubt of their truth, though he was not present when they occurred, is there a man alive, who supposes that such candid conduct would have *seemed to imply a want of authority* in the second writer? Again, had St Mark said that he omitted many important facts which he found in the Gospels of St Matthew and St Luke, though he firmly believed them, because he had not received them from St Peter, whilst he had added several incidents and observations, chiefly related to St Peter, which they had either not observed or omitted from respect to the first of the apostles, surely no man supposes that St Mark would by such acknowledgments have lessened either his own authority or the credibility of his Gospel. Had the evangelists quoted from each other in this candid and honourable manner, they would indeed have supported each other's credibility; and we might have said, with truth, that "in regard to that infinitely momentous point, the foundation of the whole building, the life of the Blessed Redeemer, it seemed good to the Spirit of Wisdom, that this should be attested by the mouths of *four* inspired witnesses, in *four successive memorials, separate and yet connected*, fitted to each other like exchequer tallies." According to the mode, however, in which they are supposed to have quoted from each other, they certainly have not confirmed each other's attestation, whilst they may be supposed to have destroyed each other's claim to the character of inspired writers.

From the beginning of the Gospels to
Matth. ii. 8.
Mark xi. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

It is on this last account chiefly that the question is worthy of discussion. Had no man written a history of our Lord but St Matthew or St Luke, taking into his account the momentous doctrines supplied by St John, his credibility would have been unexceptionable; and the Christian religion would have rested on the surest foundation, whether he had written by inspiration or not, provided he had given a faithful detail of the doctrines which he had heard, and of the miracles wrought by our Lord in evidence of the truth of those doctrines. It is not the *credibility* of any one of the evangelists, considered as mere-human historians of what they had seen and heard, that the copying hypothesis calls in question; but it is the *inspiration* of them all as historians that this hypothesis destroys completely. The harmony among the three first is certainly wonderful; and as they are known to have written at places far distant from each other, and, as had hitherto been supposed, without each other's knowledge, this harmony has been generally considered as one of the strongest proofs that they wrote each under the superintendence of the Spirit of God—the small discrepancies in their narratives, shewing that those who wrote last, had not seen what was written before them. Had they agreed universally, they might have been allowed to have copied from each other; and the truth of our religion would have rested upon the authority of the first Gospel, together with St John's, about which there is no doubt, and that foundation would have been as solid as a rock; but, if the copying hypothesis be true, how are discrepancies in their narratives to be accounted for? This is an awful question, to which, it appears to me that the advocates for that hypothesis would do well to pay greater attention than they seem to have hitherto done. Such discrepancies are natural and give additional credibility to the several memoirs of the evangelists, if these memoirs were written either from the recollection of their respective authors, or from private *memoranda* made, by each for his own use, at the time when he heard or saw what he afterwards related in a fuller and more regular detail; but if the second was in great part a tran-

In this opinion I heartily agree with those discoverers; though I am decidedly of opinion, that by copying *without acknowledgment*, and occasionally giving

different accounts of the same event, they would have destroyed each other's authority altogether.

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script from the first, and the third from the first and second, many passages occur in the Gospels which seem to imply that the evangelists considered the narratives of each other as not absolutely free from error, and therefore as not written by inspiration. Many instances of this kind have been collected by Lardner, Michaelis, Dunster, and many others, from whom I shall extract one or two, referring the reader to these authors for further satisfaction. A very important miracle is thus differently related by St Matthew and St Luke, whilst by St Mark it is omitted altogether.

“ When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him ——— And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way, and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour.”

St Mat. viii. 1—14.

“ Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick and ready to die. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly—earnestly, saying, that he was worthy for whom he should do this. For he loveth our nation, and hath built us a synagogue. Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself, for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof; wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee; but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doth it. When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel. And they that were sent returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.”

St Luke vii. 1—11.

Is it conceivable, that the two evangelists would have related the history of this miracle and of the centurion's faith in so very different a manner, had one of them been writing with the Gospel of the other lying before him? There is indeed no contradiction between the two narratives; for, as Whitby has observed, it was a rule among the Jews, “ that the messenger or proxy of any man is as himself;” and we all know that Jethro is represented in the Old Testament as coming to Moses by a messenger (a); and Solomon as speaking to Hiram by his servants (b); but certainly if we had received

(a) Exod. xviii. 6.

(b) 1 Kings v. 7.

the account of this miracle from St Matthew only, we should never have supposed that the request was made to our Lord by any other than the centurion himself in person, or that any part of the conversation was carried on by proxy. It is in fact extremely probable, as St Chrysostom has observed, that when our Lord approached very near to the door of the house, the centurion did come out to meet him; and that it was to himself and to neither of his proxies that the heavenly physician said, "Go thy way, and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee;" but these words are not introduced into the narrative of St Luke, in which our Lord and the centurion appear not to have met at all. Could this have happened if St Luke had written with St Matthew's Gospel lying before him? or would he have omitted what our Lord says of "many coming from the east and west and sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven"—information the most interesting that could have been communicated to the Gentile Christians, for whose use chiefly he is supposed to have written his Gospel! The whole is perfectly natural if both evangelists were original writers and personal witnesses of what they record; for each appears to have noted what made the deepest impression on his own mind, and which of course he most distinctly remembered; but, if the one copied from the other, I see not how it is possible to avoid the inference, that, in the opinion of the second, the narrative of the first was inaccurate.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

The dispossessing of the demoniac or demoniacs of a legion of devils, in the country of the Gadarenes, or Gergesenes, and the possession of the herd of swine by those evil spirits, is recorded by St Matthew, St Luke, and St Mark, (a) and in their accounts there is just such a harmony as we should expect in the relation of three independent writers equally honest and equally acquainted with the events described. But if they copied from each other, there is such a discrepancy among them as will compel us to admit, that, in the opinion of St Luke and St Mark, St Matthew's account is inaccurate; or, if they wrote before him, that he considered their accounts as inaccurate; for St Matthew expressly affirms that our Lord was met by *two demoniacs*, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce; whereas the two other evangelists speak of only *one* such demoniac, who according to St Luke "wore no clothes." Is it possible that St Luke and St Mark would have deviated thus far from the narrative of St Matthew, if his Gospel had been lying before them, when they were writing their own, unless they had thought his account inaccurate? I should think not; but the harmony of them all is easily restored, merely by supposing that, though both the men possessed were exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way, yet the man without clothes was more exceedingly fierce than the other, and that the attention of St Luke and St Mark, if both were present, were completely arrested by him—a circumstance in itself extremely probable. If so, they would naturally relate those circumstances of a miracle, that was equally great whether one or two men were dispossessed, which had made the deepest impression on their own minds, and were, of course, most distinctly remembered; though there can be no doubt but that they would have mentioned both the demoniacs, had the other been recalled to their recollection by the sight of St Matthew's Gospel.

Of the restoration to sight of one or two blind men near Jericho we have three different accounts by the three first evangelists, all easily reconciled to each other on the supposition of their being independent writers, but utterly irreconcilable on the copying hypothesis.

<p>"And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him. And behold two blind men sit-</p>	<p>"And they came to Jericho. And as he went out of Jericho with his disciples, and a great number</p>	<p>"And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho a certain blind man sat by the way-side</p>
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(a) S. Matthew viii. 28—35. S. Mark v. 1—22. S. Luke viii. 26—41.

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ting by the way-side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. And Jesus stood still and called them, and said, What wilt thou that I should do unto you? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes; and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him."

St Matth. xx. 29—35.

of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the way-side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace; but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called: and they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way."

St Mark x. 46, &c.

begging: And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth passed by. And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And they who went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace; but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him; and when he was come near, he asked him, saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight; thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God."

St Luke xviii. 35, &c.

These three narratives agree as completely as could be expected if written by independent authors at a distance from each other; and considered in that light their harmony is a strong proof that they were all written under the superintendence of the Spirit of God; but if the author of the second wrote with the first lying before him, and the author of the third copied from both the first and the second, their discrepancies are such as cannot be reconciled, I think, to the notion of their having written by inspiration. I allude not here to the circumstances, with respect to *place*, under which this miracle is said to have been performed; for though in our version St Luke is made to say, that it was "as they came nigh to Jericho," whilst the other two expressly affirm, that it was as they *departed from* that town, the original rightly understood exhibits no such disagreement among them. The verb ἐγγίζειν, made use of by St Luke, does indeed often signify to *approach* or *draw near*; but motion seems not to be included in its radical meaning, as it is unquestionably derived from ἐγγύς, *near*; and it is accordingly often used in the New Testament to denote *nearness* of place, and nothing more (*a*). The phrase therefore—Εγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ ἐγγίζειν αὐτὸν εἰς Ἱερικὴν—might be rendered—"And it came to pass while he was near to Jericho;" and in this sense it is understood by Whit-

(*a*) See *Scapula* and *Schleusner* on the word.

by, who justly observes, that it might be said of a man at a small distance as well from the town which he had just left, as from that into which he was about to enter. There is in this circumstance therefore no real difference among the evangelists; though it is probable that, had St Matthew's and St Mark's Gospels been lying before St Luke, he would have mentioned, as they have done, both our Lord's entry into Jericho and his departure from it in his way to Jerusalem; but how came both he and St Mark, with St Matthew's Gospel lying before them, to say that only *one* blind man was restored to sight, when the apostle-evangelist affirms that there were *two*? and how came they to omit the interesting circumstance of our Lord's touching the eyes of the blind men? If the three evangelists were perfectly independent writers, all this is easily accounted for. One of the blind men seems to have been so much more conspicuous than the other as to have been generally known by his name, and not only so, but as the son of a man likewise of some note. He was probably the person who spoke for himself and his companion. He would, of course, draw the attention of the whole company chiefly to himself; and as it was of no importance to the cause for which our Lord's miracles are so faithfully recorded, whether he gave sight to two blind men or only to one in the neighbourhood of Jericho, St Luke, and St Mark or St Peter, recollected only what had fixed their own attention at the time, and recorded only what they distinctly remembered.

From the beginning of the Gospels to
Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

The omission, however, of such circumstances, if St Matthew's Gospel was lying before them, can be accounted for only by their considering his narrative as not perfectly correct; but if they supposed him capable of inserting what did not really take place, it is obvious that they could not have believed his Gospel to have been written under the very lowest degree of inspiration. Though there is no reason to suppose that the Spirit of God brought to the recollection of the evangelists every incident, however unimportant, which they had witnessed in the life of their Divine Master, or to each individual among them, *all* the circumstances of every miracle which they had seen him perform; yet if he superintended their writing at all, it is impossible that he would permit any of them to relate as truth what was in reality falsehood. If therefore there was but one blind man restored to his sight by the miracle at Jericho, St Matthew has recorded what was not true; but the same charge cannot be brought against the other two evangelists on any supposition; for though they might, when writing their Gospels, have forgotten the case of the other blind man, *one* had certainly his sight given to him on that occasion; and the restoration of sight to one blind man by a miracle is just as complete a proof of the Divine mission of him by whom that miracle was wrought, as if it had operated upon a thousand blind men. St Luke and St Mark mention but one blind man to whom our Saviour gave sight at Jericho; but they do not say that he gave sight to one *only*. If, however, they mentioned but one, with St Matthew's Gospel lying before them, it follows, I think undeniably, that they did not believe that he had given sight to two, nor of course that the apostle had written under the influence of the Spirit of God, which they knew well would have prevented him from asserting, on so solemn an occasion, a direct falsehood, however unimportant in itself had it occurred in the work of a mere human historian. But if St Luke and St Mark considered St Matthew as thus occasionally liable to err, and of course not writing by Divine inspiration, what security can we have that, in all those places in which they seem to contradict him or each other, *they* were not at least as liable to err as *he*? or what security can we possibly have that any one of them wrote under any other superintendence of the Spirit of God, than that under which every honest historian has written since the beginning of the world? On the common hypothesis that they wrote at a distance from each other both in time and place, their occasional discrepancies may be easily accounted for, whilst their wonderful harmony is it-

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self a proof that they wrote by inspiration, since nothing else conceivable by us could have produced a harmony so perfect under such circumstances as theirs.

But it has been affirmed, with the utmost confidence, that no other account can be given of the exact agreement of the different Gospels, in a variety of passages, than that each evangelist, when writing his own Gospel, *had in his hand* the works of him or them who had written Gospels before him. As an argument for the probability of this opinion, it has been said, (*a*) that “the inspired writers of the Old Testament, especially in the historical books, quoted each other’s works precisely in the same way, in which Dr Townson and others have endeavoured to prove that the evangelists did. “Admitting this,” which in the opinion of the writer has been made undeniably evident, “what can be more probable, says he, than that the holy evangelists, with the same Almighty Spirit for their guide, would tread in the steps of their predecessors the prophets? would, in similar circumstances, do as they had done, combining together, not a twofold, but a quadruple and indissoluble, chain of history, each in succession referring to, and transcribing from, the prior accounts, and always, like the prophets, *in dicto auctore*.”

Mr Churton is the author who is here said to have made it undeniably evident that the writers of the historical books of the Old Testament quoted each other’s works without acknowledgment; and it must be confessed that he has urged very convincing evidence (*b*), that the writers of those books often record the same events in nearly the same words; but from this fact, which must have been known to every reader of the Old Testament before Mr Churton was born, it does not necessarily follow that the writers of the books of the Old Testament which have come down to us, quoted from each other. They may all have quoted, and I have no doubt did quote, from the annals or records of the kingdom, in which every important event, related to the theocracy, appears to have been inserted with religious care and accuracy (*c*); and there is one observation made by Mr Churton himself, which might have convinced him that this is the real source of the verbal harmony which prevails occasionally among the historical tracts of the Old Testament, and not that dishonourable mode of quoting from each other without acknowledgment, which he attributes to the authors of those tracts.

Speaking of the account which we have in the first book of Kings, and the second of Chronicles, of the consecration of Solomon’s temple, and of the excellence of the prayer pronounced by the monarch on that occasion, he says, (*d*) that the prayer “is preserved, as it deserved to be in both books; but, strictly speaking, by a copious extract only, as *neither book separately delivers the whole prayer*.” This is true; but where, let us ask, did the author of the second book of Chronicles find that part of the prayer which is not in the first book of Kings, if the writer of one of these copied from the other? The books of Chronicles were certainly not written till the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; and in the opinion of some of the most eminent critics, the books of Kings themselves were written during the captivity. If this last opinion be admitted, where did the writers of the books of Kings themselves find the materials of their histories? I will not however insist upon this point, since the parts of Solomon’s prayer, which are found only in the second book of Chronicles, furnish a complete proof that the writers of the historical books of the Old Testament must have had access to some source of information different from the works of each other; and what could that be but the records of the kingdom, from which, if each transcribed what suited his own purpose, they would almost inevitably relate the same events in nearly the same words?

This leads me to consider the hypothesis that the evangelists transcribed their seve-

(*a*) *British Critic*, vol. xl. p. 291.

(*b*) See his Sermon prefixed to the Works of Dr Townson.

(*c*) See the Introduction to the History of the Old Testament prefixed to the First Volume of this Work.

(*d*) Introduction to Dr Townson’s Works.

ral memoirs of our Saviour from one common record; and were we as certain that the apostles, before they separated, had really met for the purpose of drawing up a copious and authentic history of their Divine Master's life and doctrines, as we are that an authentic record was kept at Jerusalem, of the reigns of the different kings, the state of religion under each, and the preaching of the prophets, this would be by much the easiest and perhaps the most satisfactory method of accounting as well for the harmony as for the discrepancies, which we find among the several abridgments made by the three first evangelists. But that the apostles met for such a purpose as this, before they left Jerusalem, has never been supposed; and indeed the hypothesis, had it even been made and supported by the most unexceptionable testimonies of the earliest uninspired writers of the church, would deserve no regard whatever, unless these writers had each declared, without collusion among themselves, that he had possessed a copy of the original record. Even then, unless a copy of it were still in existence from which we might, from internal evidence, decide on its claims to an apostolical origin, I would hesitate, after the imposture of the book called *The Apostolical Constitutions*, to admit the authenticity of such a record. The apostles, in a state of persecution, had not the same facilities for publicly recording the actions of their Lord as the ministers of state called the *scribe* and the *recorder*, possessed in the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, for writing registers of the deeds of their respective sovereigns; nor do we ever find the evangelists appealing to any such record, as the writers of the historical books of the Old Testament frequently appeal to the annals or chronicles of the kingdom (a). A common record from which all the evangelists selected the materials of their histories must therefore be abandoned as an hypothesis perfectly groundless, notwithstanding all the learning and ingenuity which has lately been displayed, I am sure with the best intentions, in support of that hypothesis. Indeed, were I under the necessity of adopting either Dr Marsh's or Dr Townson's hypothesis, I think I would prefer the former to the latter, because it does not represent the evangelists, as the other unquestionably doth, as *tacitly censuring* each other for inaccuracy. With respect to evidence, the two hypotheses are on the very same footing; for the ingenious authors, in support of them, urge nothing but the *supposed necessity* of that which each has adopted, to account for coincidences of language and of facts among the different evangelists,—coincidences which, all parties seem to think, require some solution.

But may not all the coincidences, both in thought and in words, which appear so striking in the three first Gospels, be sufficiently accounted for, without having recourse to either of these hypotheses! I think they may; and had either Dr Townson or Dr Marsh, instead of suffering himself to be carried away by the fascination of a darling and ingenious theory, considered the case coolly, and paid attention to what passed within his own mind when recollecting the particulars of a striking event, which he had formerly witnessed, we should have had from either of them such a solution of this difficulty as would have carried conviction to every unprejudiced reader. Without presuming to draw any kind of comparison between these two eminent men and myself, I will take the liberty to suggest such a solution of this difficulty as has long been satisfactory to my own mind; and should it not give equal satisfaction to others, it may perhaps induce some man better qualified to do justice to the subject, either to improve on the hints which I shall venture to throw out, or to substitute in their stead something more conclusive.

It is admitted on all hands, that the most remarkable coincidences of both language and thought that occur in the three first Gospels, are found in those places in which the several writers record our Lord's doctrines and miracles; and it will likewise be admitted, that of a variety of things seen or heard by any man at the same instant of

From the beginning of the Gospels to
Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

(a) See, among a variety of such appeals, 1 Kings xiv. 19. and 1 Chron. xxvii. 24.

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&c. or 5439.
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time, those which made the deepest impression are distinctly remembered long after all traces of the others have been effaced from the memory. It will also be allowed, I think, that of a number of people witnessing the same remarkable event, some will be most forcibly impressed by one circumstance, and others by a circumstance which, though equally connected with the principal event, is considered by itself perfectly different. The miracles of our Blessed Lord were events so astonishing, that they must have made on the minds of all who witnessed them, impressions too deep to be ever effaced; though the circumstances attending each miracle must have affected the different spectators very differently, so as to have made impressions, some of them equally indelible with the miracle itself on the mind of one man; whilst by another, whose mind was completely occupied by the principal event itself, these very circumstances may have been hardly observed at all, and of course been soon forgotten.

That this is a matter of fact which occurs daily, every man may convince himself by trying to recollect all the particulars of an event which powerfully arrested his attention many years ago. He will find that his recollection of the event itself, and of many of the circumstances which attended it, is as vivid and distinct at this day as it was a month after the event occurred; whilst of many other circumstances, which he is satisfied must have accompanied it, he has but a very confused and indistinct recollection, and of some, no recollection at all. If the same man take the trouble to inquire at any friend who was present with him when he witnessed the event in question, he will probably find that his friend's recollection of the principal event is as vivid and distinct as his own; that his friend recollects likewise many of the accompanying circumstances which were either not observed by himself, or have now wholly escaped from his memory; and that of the minuter circumstances, of which he has the most distinct recollection, his friend remembers hardly one. That such is the nature of that intellectual power by which we retain the remembrance of past events, I know from experience; and if there be any man who has never yet made such experiments on himself, let him make them immediately, and I am under no apprehension, that if they be fairly made, the result will not be as I have always found it. Let it be remembered too, as an universal fact, or a law of human nature as certainly as gravitation is a law of corporeal nature, that in proportion as the impression made on the mind by the *principal object* in any interesting scene is strong, those produced by the *less important circumstances* are weak, and therefore liable to be soon effaced, or if retained at all, retained faintly and confusedly; and that when the impression made by the principal object is exceedingly strong, so as to fill the mind completely, the unimportant circumstances make no impression whatever, as has been a hundred times proved by the hackneyed instance of a man absorbed in thought, not hearing the sound of a clock when striking the hour beside him. If these facts be admitted, (and I cannot suppose that any reflecting man will call them in question) it will not, I think, be necessary to have recourse to *hypotheses*, to account either for that degree of harmony which prevails among the three first evangelists, when recording the *miracles* of our blessed Lord, or for the discrepancy which is found in what they say of the *order* in which those miracles were performed, or of the *less important circumstances* accompanying the performance. In every one of them the *principal object* was our Lord himself, whose powerful voice the winds and waves and even the devils obeyed. The power displayed by him on such occasions must have made so deep an impression on the minds of all the spectators as never to be effaced; but whether *one* or *two* demoniacs were restored to a sound mind in the land of the Gadarenes; whether *one* or *two* blind men miraculously received their sight in the neighbourhood of Jericho; and whether that miracle was performed at *one* end of the town or at the *other*, are circumstances which, when compared with the miracles themselves, are of so little importance, as may easily be supposed to have made but a slight impression on the minds of even some of the most attentive observers, whose

whole attention had been directed to the principal object, and by whom these circumstances would be soon forgotten, or, if remembered at all, remembered confusedly. To the order of time in which the miracles were performed, the evangelists appear to have paid very little regard, but to have recorded them, as Boswell records many of the sayings of Johnson, without marking their dates; or as Xenophon has recorded the memorabilia of Socrates in a work which has been, in this respect, compared to the Gospels.

From the beginning of the Gospels to
Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

I beg leave to introduce what I have to say on the harmony of the Gospels, in the only other details in which that harmony is remarkable, by a short extract from some learned and judicious *Remarks on Michaelis's Introduction to the New Testament*, (published in 1802) *By way of caution to Students in Divinity*.

“ Our historians, says the author (a) of that valuable tract, are labouring to report accurately the speeches and discourses of another; in which case, even common historians would endeavour to preserve the exact sense, and, as far as their memory would serve them, the same words. In seeking to do this, it is not to be wondered at, that two or three writers should often fall upon verbal agreement; nor, on the contrary, if they write independently, that they should often miss of it, because their memory would often fail them. With regard to the sacred writers, *it is natural to suppose them studious of this very circumstance; and we have also reason to think, that they had assistance from above to the same effect*: and yet it is not necessary to suppose that either their natural faculty, or the extraordinary assistance vouchsafed them, or both, should have brought them to a perfect identity throughout; because it was not necessary for the purposes of Providence, and because it would have affected their character of original independent witnesses. Let me add, that these discourses, before they were committed to writing by the evangelists, must have been often repeated amongst the apostles in teaching others, and in calling them to remembrance among themselves. St Matthew had probably often heard, and known, how his fellow-labourers recollected the same discourses which he had selected for his own preaching and writing. We know not how much intercourse they had with each other, but probably a great deal before they finally dispersed themselves. St Mark and St Luke had the same opportunities, even if they were not original eye-witnesses. I admit, then, of a common document; but that document was no other than the preaching of our blessed Lord himself. He was the great prototype. In looking up to him, the author of their faith and mission, and to the very words in which he was wont to dictate to them, (which not only yet sounded in their ears, but were also recalled by the aid of his Holy Spirit promised (b) for that very purpose) they have given us three Gospels, often agreeing in words, though not without much diversification, and always in sense.”

To this cogent reasoning I beg leave to add, that such of the disciples as could *write* the language which they daily spoke, probably committed their Master's discourses, or at least the substance of them, to writing, each for his own use, on the evening of the very day on which they were spoken. Though not very *apt* scholars, they appear to have been at least desirous of learning; for when alone with their Lord, they were perpetually asking the meaning of his parables; and St Mark assures us (c) that on those occasions “ he expounded all things to his disciples.” Such expositions were not surely either asked or given to be instantly forgotten; and the best way to preserve them, was to commit them in writing to paper or parchment. We speak indeed commonly of the apostles and evangelists as *illiterate fishermen*, incapable of writing or even of reading the language of their native country; but they were not all fishermen, nor is it by any means probable that such of them as had moved even in that humble sphere of life, were so totally illiterate as not to be able to read the versions or paraphrases, in com-

(a) Universally known, I believe, to have been Dr Randolph, the late learned and excellent Bishop of London.

(b) St John xiv. 26.

(c) Ch. iv. 34.

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&c. or 5439.
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30. &c.
Vulg. Ær. 28.

mon use, of their own Scriptures. As a tax-gatherer, St Matthew must have been able to keep accounts, not only in the language vulgarly called Hebrew, but probably in Latin or Greek, Hebrew perhaps being unintelligible to his employers; and St Luke, who, though not an apostle, was undoubtedly, for some time at least, a follower of Christ, as he was afterwards a companion of the apostles, appears to have been capable, before his conversion to the faith, of writing not only the vernacular dialect of Judea, but even *Greek* almost classically pure. It is not conceivable that such men would content themselves with treasuring up, merely in their *memories*, discourses which they were so desirous to understand, when they could so easily have made *memorandums in writing*, both of the discourses themselves, and also of their meaning as expounded by their Master. They were called upon by every motive which can influence the mind of man, by interest, ambition, duty, and reverence, to preserve his doctrines in his very words; and indeed if they had not by some means or other contrived to preserve *his words*, they could not have preserved his *doctrines*, of which they appear not to have understood the full scope till they were illuminated by the Spirit of God on the day of Pentecost. That it was the practice of the Jews of that age to commit to writing, notes at least of such doctrines as they wished to remember, is rendered unquestionable by the account which St Luke gives of the unauthorized attempts of many to write regular Gospels from the preaching of the apostles and other ministers of the word. It is the practice indeed of students everywhere at present, in those colleges where the sciences are taught by lectures from the professorial chair; and in the university of Edinburgh, so accurately are these notes taken by the small number of students who are really desirous of profiting by what they hear, and so judiciously are they sometimes connected together, that manuscript copies of the lectures of some of the professors are everywhere to be found in the possession of those who heard them read. The celebrated Dr Black, who has been called the father of the pneumatic chemistry, was one of those popular professors, of whose lectures many copies were, in this manner, taken so accurately, that the late Dr Robison, who published an authentic edition from the manuscript of the author after his death, had frequent recourse to those copies to ascertain the sense of passages in the author's manuscript, which from some cause or other had become illegible. Of copies of Dr Black's lectures, thus taken from his mouth by students, I have seen one or two, which differed not more from each other, or from the authentic edition, which has now been long in the hands of the public, than the three first Gospels differ from each other; and surely such of our Lord's disciples as could write, had more powerful motives to take notes of his discourses at the time when they heard them, than any student of a human science, even the most fascinating, had to take notes of the lectures of the most eminent professor.

But it will be said, that though the harmony as well as discrepancies of St Matthew and St Luke's Gospels may be thus accounted for, we have no evidence that St Peter and St John were capable of taking notes of their Master's discourses till after they were endowed with power from on high. That we have no *positive* and *direct* evidence that they were capable of this, must perhaps be granted; but the presumptive and circumstantial evidence that they were not such *ἰδιῶται* as were incapable of reading or writing their mother-tongue, is strong and abundant. It is indeed true, that when Peter and John were brought before "the rulers of the people, and elders of Israel," they were perceived to be what the council called "*unlearned men*;" but the original word—*ἀγράμματοι*—does not necessarily mean persons who knew not the letters of the alphabet, but only such as had not studied in the schools of the Pharisees, and were of course ignorant of the rabbinical learning and traditions of the Jews. In proof of this being its meaning, it is sufficient to appeal to the exclamation of Festus to St Paul—"Thou art beside thyself; much learning—*τὰ πολλά γράμματα* (*a*)—doth make thee mad."

(a) See Schleusner on the words *ἀγράμματος* and *γράμμα*.

for surely the governor could not suppose that any man might be made mad by the mere knowledge of the *alphabet*, or by being able to *read* and *write* even a variety of languages. It was therefore a total deficiency of that kind of learning, of which Festus thought St Paul possessed too much, that the council perceived in Peter and John, who were doubtless as capable, as the generality of their countrymen of the same station with themselves, of reading and writing the language which they spoke.

From the beginning of the Gospels to
Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

That the Jews in the humbler walks of life were generally capable of *reading* at least the language which they called Hebrew, may be confidently inferred from the book of the prophet Esaias being delivered to Jesus to read in the synagogue of Nazareth where he was brought up, at the very commencement, as it appears (a), of his ministry, and before he had completely established his prophetic character by his miracles. If the account which we have in the Gospel by St John (b) of the woman taken in adultery be authentic, it may likewise be inferred with confidence, that even *writing* the vernacular dialect was no uncommon accomplishment among the lower orders of the people of Judea; for the Jews appear to have expressed no surprise at our Lord's *writing* on the ground as men still do in the East; but when they heard him *teach in the temple*, "they marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters"—*γινώσκουσα*—the *interpretation of the Scriptures*, having never learned in the schools of the Pharisees, nor studied under the scribes and doctors of the law?

There are indeed a variety of reasons which lead me to believe that the knowledge of letters—or the ability to read and write their own language, prevailed more generally among all classes of the Jews than among those of any other nation—the Scottish nation, for the two last centuries, perhaps excepted. The law which was pronounced from the top of Mount Sinai amid scenes so awful and stupendous, that not only the people withdrew to a distance lest they should *die*, but even Moses himself "said, I exceedingly *fear and quake*," was delivered to them in *written* tables; they were commanded to meditate upon that law, and to teach it to their children; and backsliding as they were, it is hardly conceivable that the generation who heard it proclaimed, could ever forget, or wish to forget it. Their Egyptian prejudices made the majority of them indeed soon disregard the second precept of the decalogue; but long after that transgression, and the severe punishments which were inflicted on them for it and for similar transgressions, their illustrious Lawgiver said to them, at a time when his words must have made on their minds the deepest impression,—“These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and thou shalt talk of them, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates (c).”

I am perfectly aware that Bishop Patrick understands that part of this injunction, which relates to the binding of the laws or part of them for a sign upon their hand, and as frontlets between their eyes, in a metaphorical sense; but he gives no good reason for so understanding the passage; and if it be true, as he says, that the idolatrous nations of that age armed themselves with superstitious amulets on their foreheads, the grovelling minds of the Israelites, so prone to idolatry, and the principal purpose for which the ceremonial law was given, authorise us to interpret the words literally. Accordingly they were so interpreted by *Aristeas*, *Josephus*, and *Onkelos*, among the Jews; by *Justin Martyr*, *Chrysostom*, and *Isidore of Peleusium*, among the ancient Christians; and by Scaliger and others among the moderns. Bishop Patrick himself admits, that the command to write the law on the posts of their houses and on their gates, is to be

(a) St Luke iv. 17.

(b) Ch. viii.

(c) Deut. vi. 6—10.

A. M. 4034,
&c. or 5439.
Ann. Dom.
30, &c.
Vulg. Jer. 28.

understood literally; and though he thinks that the practice, which unquestionably prevailed long before our Saviour's advent, of wearing phylacteries between their eyes, on their hands and on their garments, was founded on this and a similar passage in Exodus, not properly understood, he yet candidly admits that our Lord passes no censure on the wearing of phylacteries themselves, but only on the ostentation of those Jews who made them broader than ordinary. At any rate, whether the early Jews wore phylacteries or not, they must have been perfectly aware that they could not teach their children the multifarious law of ordinances, which was all enjoined long before Moses published the book of Deuteronomy, unless they could read that law and teach their children to read it; and the use of phylacteries in the days of our Saviour, whatever may have been its origin, is a proof that those who wore them, could read their contents. It has indeed been questioned by men deeply skilled in Rabbinical learning, whether mechanics and tradesmen, or only such Jews as aspired to a superior knowledge of the law, wore phylacteries; and even Lightfoot himself seems to decide this question differently in different parts of his works, though he quotes passages from the works of various Rabbins, from which I would infer that the use of them was universal. At any rate, he thinks it probable that our Saviour, who does not condemn the use of phylacteries, wore them himself (*a*) according to the custom of the nation; for the children of the Jews, he affirms, were taught to repeat the sections of the law written on the phylacteries (*b*), and catechised in them as soon as they were of age capable of being instructed. If indeed the texts on which the practice was founded are to be understood literally, there can be no doubt but that phylacteries were worn by every one among the Jews who professed to be religious; and accordingly the same eminent Rabbinical scholar acknowledges that they were worn by the Sadducees as well as by the Pharisees, though the former sect paid no regard to those traditions with which the latter besotted themselves.

That all the children of Israel were to be taught to read and write the law, seems evident from different injunctions given by Moses immediately before he took his final leave of them (*c*); and the principal purpose of dispersing the Levites throughout all the tribes, seems to have been to make special provision for this national education; for we are assured that it was the business of the Levites (*d*) to "teach all Israel," and I need not add, that the first and most important of all instruction must have been to read and write the laws of their God. That this education was much neglected in the kingdom of Israel, after it separated from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and set up the idolatrous worship of golden calves at Dan and Bethel, there can be no doubt; and it seems to have been at a very low ebb in the kingdom of Judah before that kingdom was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, but on the return of the people from captivity, Ezra and Nehemiah appear to have been at the utmost pains to restore, in all its purity, the national system of education, as were the schools of Tiberias and Jericho in the days of our Lord. In those days, St Paul, who, being by occupation a *tent-maker*, cannot be supposed to have been born in any of the higher stations of life, yet studied in the school of Gamaliel, where he was not only taught to read and write his mother tongue, but also instructed in the language and learning of Greece, as well as in all the Rabbinical traditions of the Pharisees. When to all this we add that of the *many*, who, according to St Luke, had undertaken to write, from the preaching of the apostles, regular memoirs of our Blessed Lord, there was not probably one *scribe* or *doctor* of the law, or a single individual, whom the high priest and council of the Jews would not have classed among *unlearned men*, it is impossible, I think, to doubt, but that the Jews

(*a*) *Horæ Hebraicæ* in Evangel. Matt. cap. xxiii. v. 5. (*b*) These sections were four, viz. Exod. xiii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. Exod. xiii. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. Deut. vi. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. Deut. xi. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. (*c*) See Deut. xvii. 18. xxvii. *passim*. (*d*) 2 Chronicles, xxxv. 3.

of that age were all, except the very lowest and poorest of the people, who could not afford the expence of even the rudiments of education, taught to read and write the language which they spake. But Peter and John, though fishers, appear not to have been of this class of people. James and John, who, before their call, were partners with Peter, had hired servants in the ship with them and their father; and John was of sufficient consequence to be known even to the high priest †. They could not therefore have been so obscure as to render the rudiments of education of no importance to them, nor so poor as to be unable to afford the expence of it.

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. iv. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

Peter and John therefore were unquestionably capable of committing their Lord's discourses to writing as well as St Matthew and St Luke; and if so, we may safely infer, that in matters of such transcendent importance, they reposed not implicit confidence in their own memories. The miracles and discourses of our Lord formed the constant subject of the *preaching* of the apostles and other ministers of the Word. By comparing these with the prophecies recorded in the Old Testament, they proved to the Jews that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Messiah who had been promised to their forefathers; and there can be no reasonable doubt, but that to preserve themselves from all danger of falling into error, they made memorandums of those miracles and discourses, whilst they were yet fresh in their memories, frequently comparing their several memorandums with each other, during the many years which they appear to have remained in Jerusalem and its neighbourhood after the ascension. Of this, I say, there can be no reasonable doubt, because such has ever been the conduct of men of good sense and integrity in similar circumstances; and such, St Luke says, was the conduct of *many* with respect to the preaching of the apostles, though they were under no such obligation to record the substance of that preaching with accuracy, as the evangelists were to record with accuracy the doctrines and miracles of our Lord.

Until very lately it was the general opinion of Christians, that the Holy Ghost the Comforter, whom the Father sent to the apostles in Christ's name, for that very purpose, brought all things so distinctly to their remembrance, whatsoever the Lord Jesus had said during all the time that "he went in and out among them," as to supersede the necessity of written memorandums or of any other artificial aid to their memories. Should any man be disposed to maintain that opinion still, I will have no controversy with him; for it is certainly a harmless opinion, and involves in it nothing that is impossible, or even difficult to be conceived. Instances of men possessing such tenacious memories, that they could repeat *verbatim* long speeches, which they had distinctly heard the day before, are so numerous and so well attested, that it is impossible to question the fact. I knew myself a man who contrived by means of such a memory to earn a scanty subsistence in a very singular manner. Being a mimic as well as possessing uncommon powers of retention, he made it his business on Sunday to frequent different places of worship in the county where he lived; and having treasured up the sermon in his memory, he went from house to house during the week, repeating it with great exactness, but in a ludicrous manner, to all who would listen to him and pay for their amusement. I have frequently heard him repeat sermons in that manner, and been assured by some of the preachers whom he was thus making ridiculous, that the

† St John xviii. 15, 16. Whitby thinks that the other disciple here mentioned was not John, because he being a Galilean as well as Peter might have been equally suspected on that account. This is surely a very weak argument; for John—or whoever was the disciple—presumed on his being known to the high-priest, not only that he would be safe himself, but that he would even have interest to preserve his friend, whom he did not venture to bring into the hall till he had first spoken to her who kept the door.

It is to be observed too, that St John was much less forward to speak than St Peter, and therefore not so liable to bewray himself by his Galilean accent, had either of them been in real danger, in which they appear not to have been. Neither St Peter nor St John forsook their Master, as all the others did, when he was taken; and they appear to have been constantly together from that period till after the resurrection. See *Lightfoot's* *Horæ Hebraicæ in Evangelium Joannis*. cap. xx. ver. 24.

A. M. 4034,
&c. or 5439.
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30, &c.
Vulg. Ær. 28.

sermon was faithfully reported. The present minister of the parish of Bervie has been known to preach in the afternoon, without missing or altering a word, and preach from memory, an elegant sermon, which he could not have composed, and had never read but during the short interval between the morning and evening services of the established church of Scotland, and of which the style and arrangement were such as he could not imitate *. The accuracy with which the late Mr Woodfall reported the speeches in parliament, is, I believe, universally admitted; but even these instances of wonderful powers of memory are greatly inferior to that displayed by the late Professor Porson, when he repeated, to his friend Dr Vincent and others, a whole page of a newspaper, consisting of nothing but *advertisements*, after reading it but once over. The fact I believe is very generally known, and was reported to me by a clergyman, who was in the company—a man of honour, and under no conceivable temptation to misrepresent it. There is indeed no evidence, and very little probability, that the apostles and evangelists possessed by nature such powers of memory as any of these men; but they heard perhaps every one of their Lord's discourses which were pronounced in public, repeated in private, and when long afterwards they had occasion to make use of them in the discharge of their own apostolic duties, they were "brought to their remembrance by the Holy Ghost the Comforter," (a) in the identical words probably in which they were originally spoken.

This very common opinion therefore may be correct, for there is no distinct remembrance of *notions* or *ideas* entirely separated from *words*: but without calling in question the supernatural aid received from the Holy Ghost, and without which they certainly could not have written such books as the Gospels on any hypothesis that has yet been framed, I am myself decidedly of opinion, that the apostles, and such of the evangelists as were present, took notes of their Lord's discourses at the time when they were delivered. Even St Paul himself, all accomplished as he was, and endowed, perhaps, beyond any of them, with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, seems not to have trusted entirely to his own memory for the preservation of that knowledge of the gospel, which, as he informed the Galatians, he was taught by the revelation of Jesus Christ. The parchments which he left with Carpus at Troas, he desired Timothy to bring with him in preference even to the books of the Old Testament (τὰ βιβλία—the books κατ' ἐξοχὴν), if he could not bring both; but what could these parchments contain of equal value with the books of Moses and the prophets, if not a summary of the Gospel of Christ?

There is yet one difficulty remaining, which we must endeavour to remove, before we can completely set aside the copying hypothesis, together with that which supposes the materials of the three first Gospels to have been extracted from one common document under various forms. It will be objected to the account which I have presumed to give of the harmony, which, combined with discrepancies, prevails in the three first Gospels, that the language in which Christ taught in the temple and in the streets of Jerusalem was not *Greek*, in which the Gospels are written, but *Syriac*, or a dialect of *Hebrew*; and that therefore the evangelists have not made use of his *words* in reciting his discourses and in relating his miracles. Their narratives are *translations* of his words; and in the opinion of the zealous advocates for the copying system, it is utterly impossible, or at least in the highest degree improbable, that two translators, writing independently of each other, should render a number of Syriac words into the very same Greek words—and some of those words occurring but rarely in the Greek language*².

* The sermon that was thus preached was one of Dr Blair's.

(a) St John xiv. 26.

² A very zealous advocate for the copying hypothesis enumerates eight words, which he thinks so unusual, that no two evangelists could have employed them in the sense in which they are employed, unless one evangelist had transcribed them from the other.

(See Brit. Crit. vol. xl. p. 293.) Unfortunately for the hypothesis, *ἐπιουσιος* is the only word of the eight that is not employed in the same sense by different classical authors of Greece. *Ἐπιουσιος* indeed, is not to be found in such authors; but when this learned person shall have accounted for its use by St Matthew, it will perhaps be no difficult matter to do the same for its use by St Luke.

All this may be granted in the case of ordinary translations, from one language into another, of which the knowledge of one or both has been acquired by study in the usual way. In such cases the object of the translator is not to render the words of his author *verbatim*, but, whilst he conveys the sense as he believes faithfully, to make that author express his sentiments in such a style as he supposes he would have written, had the language into which his work is translated been his native tongue. Here there is room for much fanciful and groundless conjecture; but even in such cases, where the sole object of the translator is fidelity to the original, there is sometimes a wonderful coincidence of terms among different versions of the same passages of foreign writings by different translators, who all acquired their knowledge of the language by study. Such men render their original, word for word, into the language of the translation, without attempting to make an ancient Jew or Greek write in the idiomatical style of any modern language; and therefore when they are equally masters of both languages, and equally desirous to avoid all misrepresentation of the sense of their author, they fall naturally into the use of the same terms. Of this no other instance need be given than what is to be found in our authorised version of the four gospels, which was certainly made by different men. They indeed compared their different versions together, and were undoubtedly anxious to render the harmony among them as complete as fidelity to the original would permit them to make it; but such a verbal harmony as pervades all the versions of our Lord's doctrines, and of the different accounts of his miracles, could not have prevailed through the English Gospels, had not the translators wisely sacrificed all idomatic elegance to their desire to exhibit faithfully and without mistake the sense of the original. But would not the evangelists be as desirous of translating literally into Greek their Syriac or Hebrew originals, as were our translators of rendering their Greek literally into English? Undoubtedly they would, even had there been nothing in their case which rendered it morally impossible that they should render the same Syriac words into different Greek words: but strange as it may appear to some readers, I do not hesitate to affirm, that the harmony which prevails among the three first Gospels, though written by different authors unconnected with each other, is much less extraordinary, than would have been three different accounts of the same doctrines and miracles of their Master in terms different from each other. That verbal harmony which is so very striking, and has to some appeared as evidence that the second evangelist wrote with the Gospel of the first, and the third with the Gospels of both first and second lying before him, appears to me perfectly natural and almost unavoidable in their case.

Except St Luke, who probably acquired his knowledge of the Greek language by study and travelling, all the evangelists were instantaneously inspired with their knowledge of that language, on the day of Pentecost, when they with many others were filled with the Holy Ghost, "and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." But how were they inspired with the knowledge of these different languages? Was it with the single terms of each and their various significations? or were their minds, in addition to this knowledge, stored at the same time with all those phrases and idioms which constituted the elegancies of each language, where it was vernacular? The extravagance and absurdity of this last opinion has been shewn with such clearness and cogency of reasoning, (a) that I believe it is now maintained by no man; but if they were inspired only with Greek words or *terms* corresponding to the Syriac and Hebrew *words* or *terms* in which they had been accustomed to speak, and, let me add, to *think*, can any thing be more natural—I might say *unavoidable*, than to infer, that he who infused into their minds those words and terms, made them all express by the very same words, those ideas, notions, and relations, which constituted the subject of our Lord's discourses, and of which I believe them to have taken memorandums in his own

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.

(a) See Warburton's *Doctrine of Grace*, book 1st, Chap. 8.

A. M. 4034,
&c. or 5439.
Ann. Dom.
30. &c.
Vulg. Æt. 28.

words at the very time when these discourses were spoken. Perspicuity and consistency, not elegance, were absolutely necessary to the success of the apostles preaching and writing; and surely nothing could contribute more to produce these qualities, than to make all the inspired preachers and writers render in the same Greek terms the Syriac terms which had been made use of by our Saviour in those discourses, which, at a distance from each other, they were translating for the instruction of the world at large. St Luke, who appears to have studied the Greek language in the usual way, by reading classical Greek books, and probably by travelling into Greece, or at least into some Greek colony, writes a much purer and more elegant style than St Matthew or St Mark; but even he makes use of some Greek words, unusual in classic authors, in common with these two evangelists, as well as of Syriac idioms and phrases, either to express notions and doctrines, for which, as they were unknown to the inhabitants of Greece, no idiomatical Greek phrase was to be found, or perhaps because no man ever yet wrote in perfect purity a language in which he was not accustomed to think.

If this view of the origin of the three first Gospels be correct, it may tend perhaps to decide the question, which has been so long agitated; whether St Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew or in Greek? The early fathers of the church declare so unanimously that he wrote in Hebrew, that it is difficult to suppose that they had not some foundation for what they say; and yet his Greek Gospel has to me so much the appearance of an original composition, that all the weight of Michaelis's authority cannot induce me to believe it a translation. I would therefore, with Dr Townson, rather receive both his Gospels, if he really wrote in Hebrew, as originals, than suppose either of them to be a translation by some unknown hand; though I am decidedly of opinion, that had not the Greek Gospel been a more perfect composition than the other, the Hebrew Gospel could not have been so little known as it appears to have been to men so learned as were Origen and Jerome. I am therefore strongly inclined to believe, that St Matthew wrote his Greek Gospel long after the apostles had left Jerusalem and dispersed themselves in the discharge of the duties of their office; but that he left, at his departure, with the church of Jerusalem, or at least with some of its members, the Hebrew or Syriac memorandums of our Lord's doctrines and miracles which he had made for his own use, at the time when those doctrines were taught and those miracles performed. This, I confess, is a mere conjecture respecting a point of comparatively little importance; but I think, as framers of conjectures always flatter themselves, that it receives some countenance from the terms in which Eusebius, when giving his own opinion, mentions St Matthew's Hebrew Gospel. "Matthew, says that historian, having first preached to the Hebrews, delivered to them, when he was preparing to depart to other countries, his Gospel composed in their native language, that to those from whom he was sent away, he might by his writing supply the loss of his presence*." May not what he delivered to them have been the notes containing the substance of what they had so often heard him preach? I am inclined to think likewise that the Gospel by St Mark contains little more than similar notes or memorandums which had been made by St Peter, which will sufficiently account for so many of the ancients calling it St Peter's Gospel. That St Mark was with that apostle at Rome when he suffered martyrdom cannot reasonably be called in question. If he received the notes or memorandums in time to permit him to digest them into order before St Peter suffered, it is natural to suppose that the apostle revised the digest; and supposing them not to have come into the evangelist's hands till after St Peter's death, St Mark's Gospel will still be stamped with apostolical authority.

* Ματθαῖος μὲν γὰρ πρότερον Ἑβραίοις κηρύξας ὡς ἔμελλε καὶ ἐφ' ἑτέροισι ἵναί, πατρίᾳ γλώττῃ γράφῃ παραδούς τὸ κατ' αὐτὸν εὐαγγέλιον, τὸ λαῖπον τῇ (αἰ. τῆς) αὐτοῦ παρουσίᾳ (αἰ. παρουσίας) τούτοις ἀφ' ὧν ἐστίλλετο δια τῆς γραφῆς ἀπεπλήρου. *Eccles. Hist. Lib. 3. Cap. 24.*

These, however, are discussions of comparatively little importance; but if I have contributed in any degree to prove, that St Luke knew nothing of St Matthew's or St Mark's Gospel when he wrote his own; that the several evangelists did not transcribe from each other; and that there is no necessity to call in the aid of a common document to account either for the harmony or the discrepancies which prevail in the three first Gospels, this long Dissertation will not have been written in vain.]

From the beginning of the Gospels to Matth. ix. 8. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE SECOND PASSOVER TO OUR LORD'S TRANSFIGURATION. IN ALL, ONE YEAR AND ABOUT FOUR MONTHS.

THE HISTORY.

OUR Blessed Saviour was now in the second year of his public ministry, when the near approach of the passover † (which was the second after his baptism) called him to Jerusalem. On the south-east side of the city there was a famous pool †², and an hospital called Bethesda †³, which consisted of five porticos, in which lay a great multi-

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

† From the time that our Lord first began his ministry, to the conclusion of it, there had been four passovers held at Jerusalem; all, except the last, are not mentioned by the three first evangelists, but St John has been mindful to set every one down. The first, chap. ii. 13.; the second, chap. v. 1.; the third, chap. vi. 4.; and the fourth, chap. xiii. 1. *Pool's* Annotations.

†² The word *Κολυμβήθρα* signifies any pool or head of water that is deep enough for a man to swim in: but, as in hot countries more especially, the use of constant bathing was highly necessary, for which purpose it was usual in every great city to have public baths erected, some have imagined that this pool was a large bason of water of this kind; and that the porticos about it were places made for the convenience of dressing or undressing in the shade for those that were minded to bathe. However this be, it is certain, that in ancient times there were two pools within the compass of the mount on which the temple stood, the one called the Upper Pool, 2 Kings xviii. 17. and the other the "Pool of Siloam, by the king's garden," Neh. iii. 15. That St Jerom (who

himself had been at Jerusalem) makes mention of two reservoirs, one filled with the rains that fall in the winter, and the other with water of a deep red colour, as if it still retained a tinge of the victims that formerly were washed in it; and that Mr Maundrell, in his Travels, p. 107. informs us, that when he was there he saw still remaining what was reputed the Pool of Bethesda, whereof he gives us the particular dimensions, and tells us, that at its west end, there seem to be some old arches, not unlikely the porches in which sat that multitude of lame, halt, and blind, which are mentioned by St John, ch. v. Dr Pearce's Vindication of our Saviour's Miracles, and Wells's Geography of the New Testament, chap. iv.

†³ Some will have this word to signify a *drain* or *sink-house*, because the water which came from the temple, and the place where the victims were washed, by subterraneous passages ran into it; but most interpreters expound it an *house of mercy*, so called, say some, because the erecting of baths was an act of great kindness to the common people, whose indispositions in hot countries required frequent bathing; though the generality rather think, that it

A. M. 4035, &c. or 5440. Ann. Dom. 31. &c. Vulg. Ær. 29.

tude of poor impotent people, with distempers of all kinds, waiting for the moving of the water; for at certain times an angel came from heaven, and putting the pool in a fermentation, conveyed such a medicinal virtue into it, that the first person who entered it, after such commotion, was cured of whatsoever distemper he had. On the Sabbath-day our Saviour came to this place; and seeing a poor paralytic †, who had been in that condition for the space of eight and thirty years, and lain there a long while in expectance of a cure, but all in vain, because, whenever the water was moved, some one or other always stepped in before and prevented him; †² he immediately healed him with a word's speaking, and at the same time †³ ordered him to take up his bed and walk home; but while he was doing this, the Jews exclaimed against him for bearing a burden on the Sabbath-day, which was †⁴ directly (a) contrary to their

more properly had that name from God's great goodness shewn to his people in giving this healing virtue to these waters. *Pool's* Annotations, and *Pearce's* Vindication of our Saviour's Miracles.

† The word *ἀσθενεία*, which we render *infirmity* or *weakness*, is indeed a general name for almost all distempers, but here it is so limited in its signification, by the circumstances occurring in the man's history, that it can properly denote no other disease than what we call a confirmed palsy: For, besides that the symptoms of no other distemper do so exactly agree with the description given of this infirmity, both in point of its long continuance and extreme weakness, the very word *weakness*, in its most obvious sense, answers exactly to such a relaxation of the nervous system as the palsy is known to be, and (what is no mean circumstance) our Saviour makes use of the same form and method of cure to this very man that he applies to another paralytic, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk," *Matth. ix. 6.*

†² If it be asked, how it came to pass, that of the multitude of infirm people who lay at this pool, our Saviour should think fit to cure but one? The answer is obvious, because he was an object most to be compassionate of any in the place, not only because he was too feeble to step into the water himself, and too poor to have any to assist him, but more especially because he had been now a long while in this condition, and yet still depended upon the good Providence of God for an opportunity to be cured at one time or other. To cure at once whole multitudes, indeed, sounds more popular, and carries the face of more extensive goodness; but, besides that our Saviour might, in this case, very probably conform to the rule of cure established providentially at Bethesda, which was to heal but one person at one time, his great design in every action of this kind was to prove his character and commission from God, to which end one single and incontestible miracle was as sufficient an evidence as a thousand. The short is, since our Lord was at liberty "to do what he would with his own," or to bestow his favours where he pleased, his goodness was conspicuous in chusing the most helpless object, and his wisdom no less manifest in leaving the rest to the standing miracle of the pool. Bishop *Smallbrooke's* Vindication of our Saviour's Miracles, p. 525.

†³ It is very observable, that whenever our Lord did any miracle, he generally adjoined some circum-

stance or other to denote the truth and reality of it. Thus, after his multiplication of the loaves and fishes, he ordered his disciples to gather up the fragments, which amounted to twelve baskets full. Upon his changing the water into wine at Cana, he commanded the servants to carry it to the ruler of the feast for him to taste it. When he had healed the leper near Capernaum, he sent him to present his oblation in testimony of his cure; and here, for the same reason, viz. The demonstration of the completeness of his cure, he bids the paralytic "take up his bed, and go home." But why did he this on the Sabbath-day? Even to make his Divine power and mission more universally known, especially in Jerusalem, the capital of the nation, and centre of the Jewish church, by first working this miracle on the Sabbath-day, when there were more people at liberty to view and consider it; and then sending his patient along the streets in a very uncommon manner, and, to make the people more inquisitive, with his bed upon his back. *Calmet's* Commentary.

†⁴ The prohibition runs in these words:—"Thus saith the Lord, Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath-day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem, neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath-day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the Sabbath-day, as I commanded your fathers," *Jer. xvii. 21, 22.* and, according to the Jewish canons, those who did this were punishable either by death or scourging. It must be acknowledged, therefore, that our Saviour's injunction to the late impotent man was contrary to the letter of the law, but then it may be justly said that it was not contrary to the sense and intention of it. The law only prohibited civil labour, and restrained men from carrying such burdens as they were wont to do in the way of their trade; but it did not forbid the doing of any thing that might be a testimony of God's mercy or goodness to mankind. As therefore the Sabbath was made for the honour of God, and this action was a public monument of his mercy and power, the man, properly speaking, did not break the Sabbath, neither did our Lord deserve any censure from the Jews; especially considering that, as he was a prophet, even by their own rules he had power to require what was contrary to the ceremonial rest of the Sabbath. *Pool's* and *Whitby's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

(a) *Jer. xvii. 21.*

law. The man excused himself by declaring, that the person who had miraculously cured him, commanded him so to do, which he thought a sufficient warrant; but when they understood that it was Jesus, they (a) brought him before the Sanhedrim, with a design to take away his life as an open profaner of the Sabbath. Here, in defence of himself, he alleged,—That “since God (from whose rest they took the observation of the Sabbath) did, on that day, and all others, exercise the works of providence, preservation, and mercy, there could be no reason why he, who was his Son, and invested with full authority from him, (as (b) he proves immediately in a set speech before the council) might not employ himself on the Sabbath as well as any other day, in actions of the like nature;” which provoked the Jews still more and more against him, for they looked upon him now not only as a Sabbath-breaker, but a blasphemer likewise, who, by making himself the Son of God †, had claimed a co-equality with him.

What the result of our Saviour’s defence before the Sanhedrim was, we cannot tell, because none of the evangelists have acquainted us; but the sequel of the history informs us, that it no ways abated the malice of the Pharisees, because on the very next Sabbath-day, upon his disciples pulling some ears of corn †², (as they passed through the fields) rubbing them in their hands, and so eating them, because they were really hungry, they began again to clamour against this violation of the Sabbath; until our Saviour, in vindication of his disciples, both from the example of David †³ and his attendants, (who ate the shew-bread †⁴, which it was unlawful for the laity to eat) when

(a) John v. 16. [It certainly doth not appear from this verse, nor from any part of the chapter, that a meeting of the *Sanhedrim*, or great council, was called for the purpose of trying Jesus for a breach of the law. They were probably members of that council who challenged him for what he had done, and with whom he condescended to reason; but it seems evident that he was not brought to trial for his offence.]

(b) Ver. 19. ad finem.

† From hence it seems to follow, that though the Jews had very high conceptions of the Messiah, and were confident that when he came he would be a mighty prince, and subdue all other nations under his feet; yet they never once imagined that he would be God, or, in the strict and sublime sense of the word, the Son of God, though in the very prophecies which (as they themselves acknowledge) relate to the Messiah, he is called IMMANUEL, Isaiah vii. 14. and elsewhere, “the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace,” Isa. ix. 6. *Whitby’s* Annotations. [This is true of the Jews of that age, but not of their more intelligent and pious forefathers! See *Dr Nares’s* Remarks on the Unitarian Version of the New Testament.]

†² What our Lord’s disciples did in this case could not be accounted any unjust invasion of another’s property, because the law had indulged them thus far:—“When thou goest into thy neighbour’s standing-corn, thou mayest pluck the ears with thy hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle to thy neighbour’s standing-corn,” Deut. xxiii. 25. It was not then for plucking the ears of corn, much less (as some say) for breaking their fasts before they had celebrated the public offices, (which was contrary to the custom of the Jews, Acts ii. 15.) that the Pharisees took exceptions to the disciples, but for plucking them on the Sabbath-day, whereof they thought this action

(which, at other times, was lawful enough) to be a violation, and, accordingly, our Saviour’s whole vindication of them turns upon this supposition. *Hammond’s* and *Whitby’s* Annotations.

†³ There is something very cogent in our Saviour’s argument, taken from David’s practice, because, according to the concession of the Jews themselves, his example contains two things tending to excuse the violation of the Sabbath; 1. That they suppose that David and his men fled on the Sabbath-day, and yet were not guilty of breaking the rest of the Sabbath; for “our masters think it lawful,” say they, “in him, whom the Gentiles or thieves pursue, to profane the Sabbath, by the preservation of his life, even as David, when Saul pursued to kill him, fled and escaped.” 2. That their own canons allowed the laity to eat of the shew-bread for the preservation of life; for “it is a small thing,” say they, “to hold that it is lawful for us to eat of the bread removed from the table; it would be lawful for us, in the extremity of hunger, even to eat of the bread now sanctified upon the table, if there were no other.” And indeed this opinion, that it was lawful to violate the Sabbath for preservation of life, seems plainly to have obtained before the translation of the Septuagint, who render the words in Exod. xii. 16. to this purpose, “Ye shall do no servile work on it, but that which shall be done for the safety of life. *Whitby’s* Annotations.

†⁴ The shew-bread (which in Hebrew is literally *the bread of faces*) was so called, not because it was set upon the golden table, which was in the sanctuary, but because it was placed before the Lord, i. e. not far from the ark of the covenant, which was the symbol of his more immediate presence. These loaves, according to the number of the tribes, were twelve: They were made four-square, covered over with leaves of gold, and were of a considerable bigness, having about three quarts of flour in each. They were ser-

A. M. 4035,
&c. or 5440.
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31, &c.
Vulg. Br. 29.

they were hungry, and from the example of their own priests, who performed the work of the temple on the Sabbath-day, endeavoured to convince them, "that works of necessity were sometimes permitted, even to the breach of a ritual command; that acts of mercy were the best and most acceptable method of serving God upon any day whatever; that it was inverting the order of things to suppose that "man was made for the Sabbath, and not the Sabbath for the benefit of man." But if even it were not so, that he, as the Son of God ||, and consequently "Lord of the Sabbath," had a power to dispense with the ceremonial laws (*a*) concerning it."

Not long after this our Saviour left Jerusalem and returned into Galilee, where on another Sabbath-day, while he was preaching, there stood before him a man whose right-hand was shrunk and withered; and when the scribes and Pharisees insidiously watched him whether he would cure him or not, our Lord bad him stand up in the midst of the assembly as an object of public commiseration, and turning to these superstitious observers of the Sabbath, put the question ||² to them, whether they "thought it lawful on the Sabbath-day to do good or ill, actually to save life or negligently to destroy it?" And then from their own practice in running to the relief of any dumb creature on the Sabbath-day, he fairly inferred, that whatever their hypocritical pretences might be, they themselves esteemed it lawful to do good on that day; and so, looking about him with some marks of indignation for their strange perverseness, he command-

ved up hot every Sabbath-day, and, at the same time, the stale ones, which had been exposed the whole preceding week, were taken away, and allowed to be eaten by none but the priests, and that only in the holy place, which was the tabernacle at first, and afterwards the temple, Lev. xxiv. 5, &c. and the reason of this institution seems to have been to represent, in a more lively manner to the people, God's government and presence among them; that, as the tabernacle first, and then the temple, was his palace and place of residence, so these weekly services of bread, wine, and salt, (say the Jews) were to denote his habitation among them, as if he had been an earthly prince for whom such provisions are made. *Calmet's Dictionary* under the Word, and *Lamy's Introduction*.

|| There are some who pretend to infer, from the passage of St Mark, chap. ii. 27. that the words in St Matthew, "The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath," chap. xii. 8. are of the same import with, "The Sabbath was made for man;" so that the Son of man is here put for all men in general, and consequently the sense of the words must be, that every one is Lord of the Sabbath, to observe or dispense with it according to the call or exigency of his affairs. But besides that the phrase "Son of Man," which is used no less than eighty-eight times in the New Testament, is, in all other places, set to denote our blessed Lord, and in Dan. vii. 13. from whence it is originally taken, it is thought by all ancient Jews as well as Christians, to signify the Messiah only; it is plain that these two passages are distinct propositions in St Mark, chap. ii. 27, 28. and that they can relate to no other than our Saviour Christ, because he tells the Pharisees, and therein means of himself, that in that place "there was one greater than the temple," i. e. whose prophetic office was of more consequence to the world than the sacerdotal administrations in the temple, and ought therefore, least of all, to be in-

terrupted by a superstitious observation of the Sabbath. "The Sabbath was made for man," must therefore signify, that it was first appointed for the good and benefit of man; and being so, it cannot reasonably be supposed to oblige him to any thing so contrary to humanity, as starving or debilitating his nature; and therefore as "the Son of Man came not to destroy mens lives, but to save them," he must have power, in such cases as concern the good and welfare of mankind, to dispense with the strict rest of the Sabbath which the law required. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Hammond's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

(*a*) Mark ii. 27.

||² This is not contrary to what St Matthew, Chap. xii. 10. tells us, viz. That they asked him, because both are true. They asked him, "Whether it was lawful to heal?" And he, in reply, says, "I also will ask you one thing, Is it lawful on the Sabbath-day to do good, or to do evil? Luke vi. 9. We are not however to suppose, that by doing evil our Saviour propounded to the Pharisees, whether, on the Sabbath-day, it was lawful to do that which, on any other day, is utterly unlawful; for then, without doubt, they would have had a ready answer for him; but only, whether, according to the institution of the Sabbath, it was lawful to do good, or not to do it, to save life, or not to save it, when a man had it equally in his power. And the reason why our Saviour instances in saving a life is, because it was a maxim then among the Jews, that on the Sabbath-day all servile work was prohibited, except where the life of any man or beast was concerned; but the modern Jews are of a contrary opinion, and, in hatred to Christians, (as Grotius thinks) have loaded the observation of the Sabbath with such trifling and superstitious practices, as their fore-fathers and ancient doctors knew nothing of. *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

ed the poor man to stretch out his lame hand, and that very moment it became as sound as the other.

The Pharisees, however, though silenced by his arguments, and surprised at his miracles, would not surcease their malice, but joined in consultation with the Herodians (though a sect quite opposite to them in principles) how they might take away his life; which when our Saviour understood, he withdrew with his disciples * toward the sea-side; but which way soever he went, his name was now grown so famous, that vast multitudes, not only out of Galilee, but from Jerusalem, from the provinces of Judea and Idumea †, and all the country about Jordan, as far as the Mediterranean Sea, to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, hearing the report of his miraculous power to cure all diseases with a word of his mouth, the touch of his hand, or barely the touch of his garment, came, with their sick and possessed, for help, and as fast as they came he cured them. Nay, to such a degree was his fame increased, that the very devils and unclean spirits publicly confessed that he was "the Son of God," till upon all occasions they were restrained and compelled to silence.

Finding some inconvenience in the pressures of the people, he ordered his disciples, for the time to come, to have a small vessel always in readiness for him to step into upon occasion; and so retired to a solitary mountain †², where he continued all night in prayer, intending next morning to make an election of some particular persons, both to be witnesses of his actions and discourses, and after his departure out of the world, his vicegerents upon earth, founders of his church, and propagators of his Gospel.

* It was a direction which our Saviour gave to his disciples, "when they persecute you in this city, flee to another," Matth. x. 23. and a rule which himself put in practice: For when, by his doctrine and miracles, he could do no good upon men by reason of the hardness of their hearts, Mark iii. 5. he usually departed, and retired, that he might give place to their wrath, and secure himself from their malice, Matth. xii. 15. and John viii. 59. When the Providence of God brings trials upon us, we may reasonably hope that his mercy will be magnified in our rescue from them; but there is not the same assurance due to those troubles which our own forwardness or indiscretion involves us in. God hath no where promised to work miracles for our deliverance, nor engaged to save those who are not careful to save themselves. He hath commanded us to take up our cross when he lays it in our way, but he hath not commanded that we should go out and seek it; nay, or that we should meet it when we can pass by another way, and honestly and with a good conscience escape from it. He hath promised "to succour them that are tempted," i. e. such as are purely passive in the thing; but when men break their ranks, and, without orders from their commander, will needs march up (as it were) to the mouth of a loaded cannon, by turning their own tempters, this is not courage, but fool hardiness; and whatever expectations these men may cherish of God's assistance in such cases, they are not the effects of a vigorous faith and well grounded trust, but of a blind and hot-headed presumption. *Stanhope's Occasional Sermons.*

† Though this be no more than a Greek name derived from the Hebrew idiom, yet it is not to be understood of the original habitation of the Edomites, Mount Seir, but rather of that southern part of the

province of Judea, which, during the captivity of the Jews at Babylon, being left destitute, or not sufficiently inhabited by its natives, seems to have been possessed by the neighbouring Idumæans. These Idumæans, when afterwards conquered by the Maccabees, chose rather to embrace the Jewish religion than to quit the habitations they had taken possession of; and though hereupon they were incorporated into the body of the Jewish nation, yet that tract of Judea which they inhabited did not so soon lose the name of Idumæa derived from them, but retained it, not only in our Saviour's days, but for a considerable time afterwards. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†² Some have thought that the words ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ should be rendered "in an house of prayer of God," or, "in a synagogue dedicated to the service of God;" but then they will be concerned to find out any house of prayer which at this time stood on a mountain, or any place (except the temple) which was called by that name: Nor can we conceive why our Lord should go out into a mountain to pray, if it were not for the privacy and retirement of it, which he could not have had in any common place of Divine worship. Our Saviour, however, being about to send out his twelve apostles, thought that so great a work as this could not be done without offering up his solemn addresses to God for their success; and accordingly having found out a place of retirement, he thither betook himself, and, as the evangelists inform us, continued all night in prayer, leaving the bishops and governors of his church an example what they are to do in the great and momentous affair of appointing persons to the ministry of the Gospel. *Whitby's and Pool's Annotations.*

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The number of these, according to the patriarchs, was twelve; Simon (who is likewise named Peter) and Andrew; James † (commonly called the Great) and John; Philip and Bartholomew †²; Matthew and Thomas †³; James (commonly called the Less) and Simon †⁴ the Canaanite; Judas, the brother of this James, and †⁵ Judas Iscariot, who so justly deserved the title of traitor †⁶. To these he gave the name of apostles †⁷; and as he perceived the multitude gathering round him, these he called nearer

† These two brothers our Saviour calls *Boanerges*, a word composed of two Hebrew or Syriac words, but what have suffered some alteration in their passing into the Greek language. For whether it be that the Greek transcriber has mistaken them, or that this might be the corrupt way of pronouncing them in Galilee, certain it is, that the originals are *beni rehem*, denoting “sons of thunder,” or “of a tempest;” a name given them in allusion to the natural heat and zeal of their temper, and that vehemence and efficacy wherewith our Saviour foresaw that they would preach the Gospel. Of the former of these they gave an early instance, in their desire to call down fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans, Luke ix. 54. and in the Acts of the Apostles we find that Peter and John are the chief actors and speakers in the defence and propagation of the Gospel, and that the zeal of James and Peter seems to be the reason why the one was slain by Herod, and the other imprisoned in order to the like execution. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Beausobre's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†² The name given here to this apostle is not his proper, but patronymical name, and imports only the son of Tholomew or Tolmai: So that we are still at a loss for his personal name, unless we will admit of the conjecture that he was indeed no other than Nathanael. To this purpose it is remarkable, 1st, That as no other evangelist makes mention of Nathanael but St John, so he never once makes mention of Bartholomew. 2dly, That in the catalogue of the apostles Philip and Bartholomew are always coupled together, and were, very probably, sent out together to preach the Gospel: And fit companions they were, supposing Nathanael to be the man with whom, it is plain, that Philip had an intimacy, and was the first instrument of bringing him to Jesus. 3dly, That this Nathanael is, by St John, chap xxi. 2. named in company with several of the apostles, upon our Saviour's shewing himself at the sea of Tiberias, after his resurrection, which the evangelist tells us was the third time of his doing so, ver. 14. and some presumption that he was one of them. 4thly, That at the two former times it is expressly said that he appeared to the eleven, John xx. 19, 26. And here, at the third time of his appearance, those that are named with Nathanael are all of that number. From these considerations it is more than probable, that Nathanael was one of the apostles; which can only be accounted for, by supposing that St John calls the same person by his proper name Nathanael, whom the other evangelist calls by his patronymical, Bartholomew. *Stanhope*, on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

†³ Thomas, in Hebrew, or Syriac either, signifies

a twin, and so is the same with Didymus, that other name whereby this apostle is sometimes called.

†⁴ Some are of opinion that Simon is here called the Canaanite from Cana, a little town in Galilee, the place of his birth and habitation; but others rather think, since this apostle is by St Luke, chap. vi. 15. called Zelotes, the *Κανανίτης* and *Ζηλωτής* are perfectly the same, just as Cephas and Peter, Tabitha and Dorcas are. That there was a faction among the Jews, a little before the destruction of their city and nation, who assumed to themselves the title of Zealots, (out of an hypocritical ostentation of holiness, though at the same time, in their hearts and practices, they were the lowliest of men) we have given a sufficient account above, vol. ii. p. 646, 647. but whether that faction was in being in our Saviour's time, or whether to be of the number of such zealots may not be an injury and reproach to this apostle's memory, is much to be doubted. *Hammond's* Annot. and *Calmet's* Comment.

†⁵ This man's surname may be taken, either from the place of his birth, which was Carioth, in the tribe of Issachar, whereof we have mention in Josh. xv. 25. and Amos ii. 2. or from the Syriac word *Secariat*, denoting the purse or wallet which it was the office of this Judas to carry; or from the word *Ashara*, or *Iscara*, which signifies to *strangle*; and therefore a name which the evangelists might give him after his death: But all these etymologies are no more than mere conjectures. *Hammond's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

†⁶ The wisdom of Christ saw fit to admit Judas into the number of his disciples, that by him the counsel of God, in giving up his Son to death, and the predictions of the prophets, might be fulfilled, Acts i. 16. This very person, however, is by our Lord sent to preach the Gospel, to cure diseases, and to cast out devils, who had himself a devil, John vi. 70. thereby to teach us that the mission of a person may be valid, though he be not sanctified, and that in things belonging to the ministerial office, we should hearken even to such persons, and obey them. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†⁷ The word *Ἀπόστολος* signifies an *envoy*, and was a name given by the Jews to any messenger in general, but more especially to such persons as were sent by the high priest and heads of the people, to collect the tithes and other dues belonging to the temple or synagogue, or to carry their orders and mandates to the cities and provinces, when any affairs relating to religion were transacted; and to this custom St Paul seems to allude, where he styles himself “an apostle, not of man, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ,” Gal. i. 1. Our Saviour indeed, as he was no lover of innovations, took the word from among the Jews;

than the rest to him, and began that most excellent discourse which comprises all the great principles of the Christian religion, and is commonly called the † “Sermon on the Mount.”

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

Herein he pronounces divers blessings, both spiritual and temporal, to such as the generality of the world esteemed miserable: To the poor in spirit, or humble minded; to the kind and merciful; to the pious mourners; to the peace makers; to the meek and patient; to the pure in heart; to such as hunger and thirst after righteousness; and to such as are persecuted upon the account thereof. Herein he instructs the apostles more especially in their duty; and in several comparisons setting before them the high station wherein he had so lately placed them, and how much it would redound to their honour if they behaved well, and to their dishonour if otherwise; he recommends to them, above all other things, purity of life and conversation. Herein he expounds the true meaning, and shews the just extent of several moral precepts, viz. the laws against murder, against adultery, against perjury; that concerning retaliation, and that of loving our neighbour; and rescues them from the wretched glosses and interpretations which the Jews had put upon them. Herein he explains, and teaches, the proper method of performing with acceptance the several duties of charity to the poor, prayer, and fasting. Herein he dissuades us from all covetous inclinations, and anxious thoughts concerning the things of this world, from a consciousness of our being under the providential care of God; and having laid down several other precepts and instructions, he concludes the whole with this admonition,—“That whoever heard, believed, and practised the things contained in his discourses, would, in the event, be like a wise builder, who laid the foundation of his house upon a rock, not to be affected by wind or weather; but that he who heard and practi-

but then he raised it to a much higher and more honourable signification; for himself declares, that he sent out his apostles, even as his Father sent out him, John xx. 21. i. e. with a full commission to act in his stead, even as he did in God's: And accordingly we may observe, that as the “Father gave judgment to the Son,” John v. 22. so in effect the Son gives judgment to the apostles, Matth. xix. 28. and Luke xxii. 30. that as the Father gave the son power to “forgive sins upon earth,” Matth. ix. 6. so the Son gives power to the apostles to “remit sins on earth likewise,” John xx. 23. that as the Father gave the Son the honour “to sit down with him on his throne,” so the Son gave the apostles the privilege to “sit with him on thrones,” Matth. xix. 28. and Luke xxii. 30. and that as the Father gave the Son to be “the foundation or corner-stone” of the church, Mat. xxi. 42. so the Son gave the apostles to be foundations upon a foundation; for so the church is said to be built upon the “foundation of the apostles, Christ being the chief corner-stone,” Eph. ii. 20. *Hammond's Annotations.*

† The mountain where our Lord delivered his discourse is generally supposed to be Tabor; for by comparing St Mark, chap. iii. 13. with the other two evangelists, Matthew, chap. xiv. 23. and Luke, chap. vi. 12, &c. we may perceive that it was not far distant from some part of the sea of Tiberias, whither our Lord had retired very lately from the Pharisees, and about five or six leagues from Capernaum, whither he returned after his descent from this mount.

But then the question is, whether this sermon be the same with what we find recorded by St Luke, chap. vi. 20. ? Now, in order to resolve this, we may observe, 1st, That the sermon in St Matthew was delivered before the healing of the leper, chap. viii. 2. whereas St Luke, who promises to discourse in order of what Christ did, gives us first the story of the leper, chap. v. 12. and then an account of Christ's sermon, chap. vi. 20. 2dly, That the sermon in St Matthew, our Lord preached on the Mount, and called his disciples up to him; whereas St Luke informs us, that our Lord came down with his disciples from a mount, and stood in the plain, and from thence preached what he recorded, ver. 20. And, 3dly, That St Luke omits the much greater part of the sermon as it is recorded by St Matthew, mentions only four beatitudes; whereas St Matthew speaks of eight, and has added four woes, ver. 24, &c. whereof we find no indications in St Matthew. Since the sermons then are so very different in their matter, as well as in the circumstances of time and place, it is reasonable to suppose that they are not the same; though, considering that after both the sermons we find our Lord returning to Capernaum, and healing the centurion's servant, Matth. viii. 5 and Luke vii. 1. we may probably conjecture, that he spake the sermon in St Matthew, whilst he was sitting on the Mount, to his disciples; but that in St Luke he afterwards spake when he came down into the plain, chap. vi. 20. in the audience of all the people, chap. vii. 1. *Whitby's Annotations.*

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sed them not, would be like a man who built his house upon the sand, soon to be blown down by the winds, and washed away by the floods †.

This sermon was delivered with such a grace and majesty, as gained the applause of the whole audience, and made them very readily declare their sense of the difference between such Divine discourses and the jejune harangues †² of their ordinary teachers, the scribes; and, to confirm his doctrine by the testimony of miracles, our Blessed Saviour, upon his descent from the Mount, healed a leper, and then remitted him to the priest, to make his oblation in acknowledgment of his cure.

At his return to Capernaum he cured, at a distance, the favourite servant of the Roman centurion †³, who had made an ample declaration of his Divine power, and thereupon received from him as ample commendation of his faith; and, at his arrival at the gates of Nain †⁴, he restored to life a widow's only son as the people were carrying him out to his funeral, to the great joy and comfort of his parent, and the no less wonder and astonishment of the spectators, who upon this occasion glorified God, and publicly declared, that (a) "a mighty prophet was sprung up among them; and that God †⁵ had visited his people."

Upon the fame of this, and several other miracles which our Saviour did daily, John the Baptist, who was still in prison, sent two of his disciples to enquire of him †⁶ whe-

† The word which we render *floods*, is in the Greek ποταμοί, which, though it chiefly signifies *ri-vers*, i. e. such streams as arise from springs, does frequently denote *land-floods*, or *torrents*, which are occasioned by any tempestuous sudden rains; for so Eustathius explains the word in his notes upon this passage in Homer, Iliad 4.

Ὡς δ' ὅτε χιμαῖροι ποταμοὶ κατ' ὄρεσφι ῥέοντες,
Ἐς μισγάγκειαν συμβάλλετον ὄρεσμον ὕδαρ
Κροναῶν ἐκ μεγάλων, &c.

†² The words in the text are, "He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes," Matt. vii. 29. But they certainly are mistaken, who interpret the words in this sense:—"He taught them as the author of the doctrine which he preached; as one who had authority in his own name to propound the terms and life of death;" because it is not only contrary to the nature of his prophetic office, but to his own frequent declarations, that "the doctrine which he taught was not his own, but his who sent him; and that he spake, not of himself or in his own name, but as he had heard from his Father, and as he had commanded him to speak," John vii. 16, 17, 18. viii. 28. xii. 49. xiv. 10. and therefore the truer interpretation is, what Lightfoot and others give us, viz. "That he spake as a prophet, having authority from God to deliver his message to them, and not as the scribes, who pretended only to deliver the traditions of their forefathers, and to teach them no more than what they had learned from Hillel, Shammai, Abtalion," &c. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†³ He was an officer, commanding an hundred men, much of the same rank and station of one of our captains, and belonged to the iron legion (as it was called), which was usually quartered in Judea. *Howell's* History in the Notes.

†⁴ Nain, so called for the pleasantness of its situation, was a town of Galilee, about two leagues from Na-

zareth, and not so much from mount Tabor, between which and the city ran the river Kison. From our Saviour's meeting the funeral coming out of the gates, we may learn, that it was a custom among the Jews to bury their dead in the day time, when the nearest friends and relations followed the corpse, which was usually carried in procession through the streets and public places, to the cemeteries, which were generally at a considerable distance from the city, because they looked upon their graves as places full of pollution; whereas we Christians, in hopes of a joyful resurrection, and upon presumption that many of those whose bodies are repositied in the earth are in a state of felicity in heaven, look upon these places with great respect and veneration, and accordingly have our tombs erected always very near, and sometimes within the body of our churches. *Whitby's* Table of Places, and *Calmet's* Commentary on Luke vii. 12.

(a) Luke vii. 16.

†⁵ The people of Nain do, in these words, acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah, or that great prophet whom Moses had promised to the Jews: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, unto him shall ye hearken," Deut. xviii. 15. for they describe this prophet in the very same terms that Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, makes use of to denote the Messiah: "The Lord hath visited his people," Luke i. 68. *Calmet's* Commentary.

†⁶ The words in the text are, "Art thou he that should come (or rather), he that is coming?" For the prophecies of the Messiah in the Old Testament were so plain, and yet his person or name so unknown to the Jews, that they were wont to express it by some circumlocution, and more especially by this of ὁ ἐρχόμενος, *he that cometh*; for so he is termed, Matth. iii. 11. xxi. 9. Luke vii. 20. xix. 38. John xii. 13. Heb. x. 37. &c. and this name they gathered from Habbakkuk, where he is called, "he that shall come," chap. ii. 3. and from Daniel, where he is styled, "he that co-

ther he himself was the promised Messiah, or some other person was to appear in that character? As our Lord was at that time working many miracles ||, curing the deaf, the blind, the lame, &c. and instructing the people that were gathered about him; instead of giving a direct answer to their question, he bad them go and report what they saw to their master. And having thus dismissed them, he began to discourse to the people concerning John, giving a large encomium of the austerity and holiness of his person †, the greatness of his function, and Divinity of his commission; and hence taking occasion to blame the perverseness of the age, in rejecting both his and the Baptist's testimony, (though the Baptist was a man of a mortified deportment, and he a person of a free and affable behaviour, so that †² nothing would please them) he proceeded to upbraid the several cities where most of his miracles had been wrought, viz. Chorazin, Bethsaida, and more especially Capernaum, with their obstinacy and impenitence; and having declared that the mysteries of the Gospel revelation were better adapted to the humble and modest, than to the proud and worldly-wise, he concludes his discourse with an exhortation to such as were thus qualified to be his (a) disciples; "Come unto me †³ all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," &c.

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

meth with the clouds of heaven, chap. vii. 13. *Hammond's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

|| If it be asked, How the seeing of these things done by our Saviour could be a sufficient argument to John's disciples, that he was, in truth, the Messiah? the reply is, That the performance of these things was exactly answering the character which the prophet had given of the Messiah, viz. That, "at the coming of God to save them, the eyes of the blind should be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; that the lame should leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb should sing," Isaiah xxxv. 4, &c. And therefore, instead of giving them a direct answer, which might be liable to the old objection of his bearing record of himself, John viii. 13. our Saviour refers them to the miracles they saw him do; miracles of the same kind that were predicted of the Messiah, and then leaves it to their own master to draw the conclusions from thence; which was a method of conviction more short and strong, and withal more agreeable to our Saviour's modesty and great humility, than any long detail of arguments would have proved. *Pool's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

† Maimonides observes, that though the Jews generally reckon eleven degrees of prophecy, yet two of these were something more sublime and excellent than ordinary prophecy. The one of these was what they called the *Gradus Mosaicus*, when the prophet had a familiar converse with God upon all occasions; and the other, when he had his revelations, not from a dream or ecstasy, but an immediate dictate of the Holy Ghost. Of this sort was John the Baptist, who was plainly told by the Father, Matth. iii. 17. John xiii. 3. and, as plainly proclaimed it to others, that Jesus was the Lamb of God. Other prophets spoke of the coming of Christ, but then they did it in a dark and obscure manner. They saw him only at a distance, in a dream, or in a vision of the night, and couched their predictions under a veil of enigmatical phrases; but the Baptist spoke of him openly and distinctly. He knew him; he was conversant with him; he pointed him out to the people; had, in short, the

honour of baptizing him, and hearing the voice from heaven testifying of him, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And, upon these accounts, we find him called a great and illustrious person, Luke i. 15. one "filled with the Holy Ghost," and, by way of excellence, the "prophet of the Most High," ver. 76. *Hammond's* Annotations and *Calmet's* Commentary.

†² The words of our Saviour, to illustrate this, are these,—“We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented,” Matth. xi. 17. which seem to be a proverb founded upon a custom among the Jewish children, to imitate what they saw done by others upon greater occasions, and particularly the custom in festivities or funerals; when in the former, as soon as the musician struck up a tune, the company began to dance to his pipe; and in the latter, as soon as some old woman had begun the mournful song, the rest followed, lamenting and beating their breasts. These the children were used to act and personate in the streets at play; and when one had begun the musician's part, and another the old woman's part, and the rest did not follow them in theirs, this gave occasion to the proverbial saying, which our Saviour applies to the present purpose in this sense. “I and John have both of us invited you to enter into the kingdom of heaven, or to turn to God by repentance. John by the austerity of his life, and I, by my affability and courtesy, have endeavoured to recommend ourselves; but all to no purpose. You will neither mourn with him, nor laugh with me; but, for that very reason, censure and revile our different behaviour, accounting him for his reserved temper no better than a “melancholic kind of mad-man;” and me, for my free and open conversation, a “mere glutton and wine bibber.” *Hammond's* Annotations and *Calmet's* Commentary.

(a) Matth. xi. 28.

†³ “To come unto Christ,” in the phrase of the New Testament, is to believe in him, and to become one of his disciples; and this invitation our Saviour

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No sooner had he finished this discourse, but a rich Pharisee (whose name was Simon) † invited him to dinner; but while he was at table, there happened an incident somewhat remarkable: For a certain woman, who not long before †² had been noted for a lewd liver, came into the house, and †³ throwing herself at the feet of Jesus, washed them with the tears which flowed from her eyes, and then having wiped them with her hair, she kissed them, and anointed them with very precious ointment †⁴.

gives to all mankind in general, and to the Jews in particular. To all mankind, forasmuch as all (without the knowledge of Christ) are heavy laden with the burden of their sins, and the calamities incident to life; are surrounded with a cloud of ignorance, and held in bondage through the fear of death: and to the Jews in particular, forasmuch as they, under their dispensation, were oppressed with a load of ceremonies, "a yoke which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear," Acts xv. 10. besides the additional weight which the Pharisees laid upon them, by their "traditions, heavy burdens, and griveous to be borne," Matth. xxiii. 4. *Whitby's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

† It is not a little strange, that any interpreters should ever imagine, that this is the same story with what we find related in Matth. xxvi. Mark xiv. and John xii. since the histories agree scarce in any thing, unless it be in bringing the alabaster box of ointment, and anointing our Saviour's feet, which in these countries, especially at great entertainments, was no uncommon thing. But now the anointing, in the other evangelists, was done at Bethany, within two miles of Jerusalem; this in St Luke, in Galilee; that in the house of one Simon the leper; this, in the house of one Simon a Pharisee; that, but a little before our Saviour's passion; this, a considerable time before it. At that, Judas was offended for the waste of the ointment; at this, Simon for the woman's touching our Saviour: upon that occasion our Lord vindicates the woman from one head of argument, and upon this from another. So that all circumstances make it plain, that these were different actions, done by different persons, and at different times. *Pool's* Annotations.

†² Who this woman was, the Gospel no where tells us. We read indeed of three persons, who by several evangelists are said to have anointed our Lord's head and feet, viz. Mary Magdalene, Mary the sister of Lazarus, and this other woman whom St Luke calls a sinner: and some commentators make these three to be one and the same person. It is to be observed, however, that the sister of Lazarus is all along represented as a person of great sobriety and virtue, who always lived at Bethany, was none of our Lord's attendants, nor ever came into Galilee; and consequently was a woman distinct from Mary Magdalene, who was of his retinue, Luke viii. 2; and from this other woman who anointed his feet in Simon's house: but whether this Mary Magdalene, and this woman, here called a sinner, might not be the same person, is not so easy to determine. The characteristic of Magdalene is, that she was the person, "out of whom our Lord had cast seven devils;" but then, if the

ejection of these devils be understood (as some will have it) in an allegorical sense, the words will well enough suit with the sinner in St Luke; or suppose they were real devils, the ejection of them might be some time before her coming into Simon's house, and (as our Saviour's vindication of her seems to imply) her reformation consequent thereupon, though Simon knew nothing of it. For these reasons some have imagined, that the sinner in St Luke and Mary Magdalene were both the same person, and that she was called Magdalene from the town and castle of Magdal, where her husband, who had been a man of great distinction, but then dead, had lately his habitation. It must not be dissembled, however, that the most general and prevailing opinion is, that these were two different and distinct women. *Calmet's* Dissert. sur les trois Maries, and *Hammond's* Annotations.

†³ The manner of the Eastern people was to lie upon a kind of bed, or couch, while they were at meat; to put off their sandals before they lay down; and to have their servants and domestics stand behind at their feet; so that this woman wanted not an opportunity to express her devotion to our Lord while he was in this posture. *Beausobre's* Annotations.

†⁴ That it was a customary thing among the ancients, especially at great entertainments, to use ointments and costly perfumes, appears from several authorities. The Psalmist plainly informs us, that this was the custom of the Jews, when, in acknowledgement of God's great bounty to him, he declares, "Thou has prepared a table for me; thou has anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full," Psal. xxiii. 5. The scholiast upon Aristophanes acquaints us with the same custom among the Greeks, when he makes it a rule, that they who invite to an entertainment should bring forth to their guests crowns and ointments, στεφάνους, καὶ μύρα παρατίθεσαν. And that among the Romans, the like usage prevailed, is evident from that sharp but jocular epigram in Marshall:

Unguentum fateor bonum dedisti
Convivis, herc, sed nihil scidisti,
Res falsa est, bene olere, et esurire,
Qui non cœnat, et ungitur, fabulle,
Hic vero mihi mortuus videtur.

lib. iii.

The general custom indeed upon these occasions was, to anoint the head, and very seldom the feet: But besides that the latter was a token of more humility, and no less esteem in this woman, she could not perhaps have an opportunity of coming at our Saviour's head, without giving some disturbance to the company. *Hammond's* Annotations.

Simon, who still retained something of the censorious spirit of his sect, seeing this woman thus busy in expressing her love and veneration for Jesus, began to think within himself, that † he could not possibly be a prophet, otherwise he would have known the woman to be infamous, and consequently not suffered her to touch him : But our Saviour, who well understood Simon's thoughts, proposed to him a parable of a certain creditor who had two debtors, one of which owed him ten times as much as the other, but because both of them were insolvent, he frankly forgave them both ; and then, gaining from him a confession that the debtor to whom the larger sum was forgiven, would, in gratitude, be bound to love the creditor most, he turned to the woman, and (by way of application) not only apologized both for her behaviour and his own, but reproached his host likewise for having omitted some instances of respect and civility, which this contemptible woman (as he esteemed her) had abundantly supplied. And therefore, in return for such uncommon kindness, he gave her a full pardon and absolution of her sins, which some in the company seemed to resent as an invasion of the Divine prerogative ; but that gave him no manner of uneasiness.

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1 to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

Upon his leaving Nain, he made a progress for some months round other parts of Galilee, accompanied with his apostles and several devout women whom he had cured of sundry diseases, and who, in gratitude, attended his person, and out of their own substance administered †² to his necessities ; till, returning at length to his own city Capernaum, such multitudes of people, upon the rumour of his being come again, resorted to him, that neither he nor his disciples could find time to eat. But “ his meat was to do the will of God,” by healing the sick and relieving the oppressed ; and therefore as soon as a poor demoniac, both blind and dumb, was brought before him, he immediately restored him both to his speech and eye-sight, insomuch, that all who saw it were greatly astonished, and with a general voice declared, that the person who did such wonderful works could be no other than the promised Messiah.

The Pharisees, however, and doctors of the law, who came from Jerusalem, gave another turn to this miracle. They ascribed it to the power of the devil †³, even to Beel-

† Though the Jewish religion permitted harlots of their own nation to enjoy all the privileges of other women, except that their oblations were rejected as impure, yet the Pharisees, who pretended to a greater degree of sanctity than others, would not admit them to civil usage, or the common benefits of society, and thought religion itself, and the honour of every prophet, concerned in this preciseness. This was the reason of Simon's making this objection within himself : But therein he draws three false conclusions ; 1st, That had Jesus been a prophet, he must have known what the woman was ; as if prophets knew every thing, and were able to look into the secrets of the heart. 2dly, That as this woman was a sinner, our Saviour should not have suffered her to touch him ; as if the external touch of a person, engaged in any vicious course, could communicate pollution to one that was innocent. And, 3dly, That this woman, whom he knew to be a sinner some time before, was still in the same condition ; as if it were not in the power of God at any time to touch the heart, and in a moment to inspire sincere repentance. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†² It was customary, says St Jerom on Matth. xxvii. 55. among the Jews, for women, and especially for widows, to minister necessities to their teachers ; and this without any scandal or imputation upon their honour. Our Saviour lays it down as a general rule,

that “ the labourer is worthy of his hire,” Luke x. 7. and the apostle accounts it no more than justice, that they who sow to others spiritual things, should be allowed to reap their carnal things, 1 Cor. ix. 11. Of what condition or quality these women were that attended our Lord, we are not told : They might be virgins, widows, or wives, who had an allowance for themselves from their husbands : However, it could be no injustice done their families, to give unto him who was Lord of all which they and their husbands possessed ; and who, “ though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be rich,” 2 Cor. viii. 9. *Whitby's and Pool's Annotations.*

†³ That which made the Pharisees thus calumniate our Saviour's miracles was, their finding the people induced by them to believe that he was the Son of David, Matth. xii. 23. which was but another word for the Messiah, the king of the Jews. For though they might have some apprehensions, that if this belief obtained, it might possibly bring the power of the Romans upon them, John xi. 48. yet their chief fear was, that the greatness of his miracles, and excellence of his doctrine, would put an end to their credit and authority among the people, since they were conscious to themselves that they could not vie with him in either. *Whitby's Annotations.*

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zebub †, the chief of the devils; and therefore †² our “blessed Saviour, by the comparison of a kingdom or house divided against itself, (which is the readiest way to bring it to desolation) shews the absurdity of their allegations, since by that means the devil would take the most effectual course to destroy his own empire. Nay, he argues from their own pretensions of having certain allowed exorcists †³ among them, that evil spirits might be cast out by the finger of God; that, when they were apparently so, it was very manifest that the kingdom of God, or the Messiah, was come among them; that obstinately to resist the evidence of such miracles, or to ascribe them to a diabolical power, was that “sin against the Holy Ghost,” which is of a nature unpardonable; and that, since they had been so impious as to blaspheme the Holy Spirit, by which he wrought them, nothing less could be expected, than that the devils ejected by him, finding nowhere among the heathens such desirable habitations of rest and contentment, as among them, would endeavour to return, with several others worse than themselves, and, by their prodigious wickedness and obstinate infidelity, finding them more prepared than ever to receive them, would there take up their settled abode; and having made them more incredulous and obdurate, more impure and wicked, more hypocritical and blasphemous than they were before, would bring upon them too a more lamentable destruction.”

All this, however, hindered not the scribes and Pharisees from demanding of our Saviour some new sign or miracle in evidence of his mission; but as he had given them a sufficient number of these already, he only referred them to one that would not come to pass till after his death, namely, that of Jonas, whose deliverance from the whale’s

† By several passages in the Gospel it seems evident, that the Jews at this time had a notion of a kind of empire, and subordination among the infernal powers, and that the prince of this empire was called Beelzebub. Beelzebub signifies properly the “god of flies;” but why a name of so mean an import should denote the head of the apostate angels, it is not so easy a matter to determine, unless we will admit of this conjecture, viz. That as the people of Ekron had an idol which they styled Beelsamen, i. e. “the god of heaven,” by other nations called Jupiter Olympius, the Jews, who used to give nick-names or names of contempt to all false gods, called it sometimes Beelzebub or the god-fly, because these heathens worshipped it under the figure of that insect, and sometimes Beelzebub, or the god of ordure, because some sort of flies delight to feed on excrements. However this be, it is certain that the apostles, in several places of their writings, do seem to insinuate, that among the apostate spirits, there was one superior to the rest, whom therefore they call “the Prince of Darkness,” Luke xxii. 53. “the Prince of this World,” John xii. 31. and “the Prince of the power of the Air,” Eph. ii. 2. who, in the days of Tobit, went under the name of Asmodeus, chap. iii. 8. and is now by the Jews generally called Sammael, and by the Christians Lucifer. *Beausobre’s* Annotations, and *Calmet’s* Commentary.

†² The argument which our Saviour employs against the Jews upon this occasion is what we call *ad hominem*. He supposes, as they did, that among evil spirits there was a form of government which was to last unto the end of the world, and in it a certain subordination which made it subsist; and from this prin-

ciple he argues—“That it was impossible that an empire divided against itself should last long; incongruous to think, that a prince, who knew his own interest, would send part of his forces to engage his own generals, and compel them to surrender to the enemy what they had lately taken from them; and therefore a thing utterly incredible, that the prince of the devils should give orders to other inferior devils, to quit the bodies which they had taken possession of, and consequently that he should expel any in the name or by the authority of Beelzebub.” *Calmet’s* Commentary.

†³ That it was customary among the Jews to cast out devils by the invocation of the name of the Most High, we may learn from Justin Martyr, who, in his dialogue with Trypho, tells him, that “if any Jew exorcised a devil in the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, perhaps he would obey him;” from what Irenæus tells us, viz. That, “by the invocation of the name of God, even before the advent of our Lord, men were saved from evil spirits, and all kinds of demons;” and, from what Origen (*cont. Cels.*) affirms, viz. That “the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, being used by the Jews, in the incantation of devils, did great miracles;” and if this was a common practice among the Jews, then will the force of our Saviour’s argument be this,—“You make no doubt but that your exorcists, who use the name of God, do eject devils by virtue of that name; and how partial is it then in you to pass an unjust censure upon me, in whom you see far greater evidences of the finger of God, in my casting out all manner of evil spirits, and healing all kinds of diseases?” *Whitby’s* Annotations.

† belly, after three days confinement, was an eminent type of his resurrection, after as long a continuance || of his body in the bowels of the earth: and thence he took occasion to remind them, “ that the inhabitants of Nineveh †², a pagan city, and also the queen of Sheba †⁵, should rise up in judgment †⁴ against that generation, and condemn it, because the former repented at the preaching of Jonas, and the latter took a vast journey to partake of the benefits of Solomon’s wisdom, whereas they refused to hearken to one who was incontestibly †⁵ greater than either Jonas or Solomon.”

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23 Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

While he was continuing his discourse in this manner, word was brought that his mother †⁶ and some other kinsfolk were at the door, desiring to speak with him, (for fearing either that he might be too much transported by his ministry, or grow faint for

† The word in the original signifies not a *whale*, but any *large fish*; and some naturalists are of opinion, that it was not a whale, whose gullet is too narrow for that purpose, but rather what the Greek calls the *lamia* or *dog-fish*, (as we shewed elsewhere) whose throat is more capacious, that swallowed up Jonah. Vid. vol. ii. p. 386, &c.

|| But how can our Saviour be said to have continued as long in the grave as Jonah did in the whale’s belly, when there were no more than two nights and one whole day between his death and his resurrection? Now, for a resolution of this, we must observe, 1st, That the Hebrews began their computation of a natural day from the evening or night preceding; so that, from one sun set to another sun-set, they reckoned a complete day, even as Moses does, when he says, “ The evening and the morning were the first day,” Gen. i. 5.; 2dly, That it is a common thing with them, as well as other nations, to put part of a day for the whole; so that, whatever is done in any part of the day, is properly enough said to be done on that day; and, 3dly, That they usually reckon that to be done in so many days, or so many days and nights, which begins in any part of the first, and ends in any part of the last day. Now, allowing this manner of computation, and reckoning that the first day began on Thursday at sun set, and ended upon Friday at sun-set, since our Saviour died on Friday about three in the afternoon, by putting a part for the whole, here we have one day. Saturday is allowed on all hands to be another; and since the third day began on Saturday at sun set, and our Saviour rose on the morning following, that part of the day being likewise put for the whole, is fairly computed for the third. The Hebrew child, according to law, was to be circumcised the eighth day, but then the day of its birth and of its circumcision were both counted; and, in like manner, if we reckon the day on which Christ died for one, and that on which he rose for another, including withal the night belonging to the former, we may properly enough say, that, in imitation of the prophet Jonah, “ he was three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. *Whitby’s* and *Hammond’s* Annotations, and Bishop *Kidder’s* Demonstration, lib. i. c. 8.

†² This city is generally supposed to have been built by Nimrod, was situate upon the river Tigris, and famous once for being the metropolis of the first, i. e. the Assyrian empire, *Wells’s* Geography of the New Testament.

†³ Sheba, or Saba, is a province of Arabia Felix, lying to the south of Judea, and on the extreme part of the continent, and, being bounded by the ocean, is therefore said to be “ the utmost part of the earth.” *Wells’s* Geography of the New Testament.

†⁴ This is spoken in allusion to a custom among the Jews and Romans, which was for the witnesses to rise from their seats when they accused criminals, or gave any evidence against them. *Beausobre’s* Annotations.

†⁵ Since God had promised Solomon, that as there was “ none like him before him, so after him, “ none should arise like him” for wisdom, 1 Kings iii. 12. our Saviour’s declaring, that in this respect he was greater than Solomon, must be plainly avowing himself to be more than man. *Whitby’s* Annotations.

†⁶ The words in the text are, “ His mother and his brethren,” Matth. xii. 46. but as the word *brethren* (according to the language of the Jews, Gen. xxix. 12. Levit. x. 4.) is of great latitude, these brothers are supposed to be either Joseph’s sons by a former wife, and so our Saviour’s brothers-in-law, or the children of Mary the wife of Cleophas, and so his cousins-german. There is, indeed, a tradition in the church, that before his espousing the Virgin Mary, Joseph had another wife whose name was Ischa, by whom he had six children, four sons, James, Joseph, Simon, and Jude, and two daughters, whose names, some say, were Esther and Thamar, others, Mary and Salome. But whoever compares Matth. xiii. 55.—xxvii. 56. Mark xv. 40. and John xix. 25. together, will find, that the four persons there said to be our Saviour’s brothers were the sons of Mary, the wife of Cleophas, (or Alpheus, for the name is all one) and sister to the Blessed Virgin, and so these brothers of his (as we said) were no more than his cousins-german. Others, however, strenuously maintain the former opinion, viz. That Mary, the mother of Jesus, was their mother, i. e. their step-mother, and they, consequently, his brothers-in-law; and that, 1st, Because this opinion retains the proper signification of the word *brothers*, in which the Jews always seem to use it, when they speak of our Lord’s brothers and sisters; and, 2dly, Because it agrees with the sense of antiquity, which, ever before St Jerom’s time, (says the learned Pearson) looked upon them as the brothers of our Lord, who lived with his mother, and are therefore so frequently found together, Matth. xii. 46. John ii. 12. *Calmet’s* Commentary, and *Beausobre’s* and *Whitby’s* Annotations.

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want of eating, or be endangered by the throng, they came to get him away); but, being dissatisfied with their unseasonable interruption, he took occasion to inform the audience, "that all worldly relations were of less consideration than the ties of duty and religion; that the names † of mother and brother, which are sanctified by the laws of God and nature, were made much more sacred when a spiritual kindred does supervene;" and so turning to his disciples, he declared, "that they were his truest relations who heard the word of God and practised it."

The same day he went out of the house where he commonly abode, and, for the greater conveniency of teaching the people, repaired to the sea-shore, where being followed by the same multitudes, to avoid the throng he went on board a vessel, and from thence taught them in parables, (an usual way of instruction among the Jews, but what he had not practised before), thereby to engage the attention and accommodate himself to the capacity of those that heard him. By the parable of the sower, he represented the different successes of the Gospel, according to the different dispositions of its hearers; by the tares growing among the good seed, the mixture of the wicked and godly under the same profession of Christianity; by the grain of mustard seed, and the little piece of leaven, the wonderful increase and propagation of the Gospel from small beginnings; by the treasure in the field, and the pearl of great price, the inestimable benefits that would accrue to the true professors of religion; but that the profession of it would include a mixt multitude, and be therefore like a net cast into the sea, which incloses fishes of all kinds, some good and some bad; the good to be preserved, but the bad cast away. This is the explication which our Lord gave his disciples of these several parables; and when, by their answer, he perceived that they understood them all, he concluded his discourse with one similitude more, viz. That (a) "every Gospel-teacher ought to resemble a well furnished house-keeper †², who brings all things out of his repository, both old and new, according to the occasions of his guests."

He had not continued long in Capernaum before he resolved to cross the lake or sea of Galilee; and to that purpose had ordered his disciples to prepare a vessel for

† We have another speech of our Saviour's, much of the same import with this. For when a certain woman in the company, upon hearing his excellent doctrine, broke out into this exclamation, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked!" his reply is, "Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it," Luke xi 27, 28. For "whosoever shall do the will of my Father, who is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother," Matth. xii. 50. which texts do not derogate any thing from the honour truly due to the Blessed Virgin, as the mother of the Messiah; but only shew the folly of some who exalt her above Christ, whom, considered only as his mother, Christ himself seems here to set beneath every true believer; though, considered as a believer likewise, she has a just title to pre-eminence, and it is "by that she is infinitely more happy than if she had only been his mother according to the flesh." *Chrysost. Hom. xlv. Calmet's Commentary, and Pool's Annotations.*

(a) Matth. xiii. 52.

†² And what this house-keeper was in his own family that should every minister of the Gospel be in the church of Christ. He should be thoroughly instructed in the Word of God, and capable of amassing a plentiful provision of all knowledge, both sacred

and profane. "To bring out of his treasure (or store-house) things new and old," was a kind of proverbial saying among the Hebrews, and denoted a man's giving a plentiful or liberal entertainment to his friends, and such as came about him. And therefore as the householder, if a man of substance and sufficiency, of a large stock, and as large a mind, will entertain his friends and guests with plenty and variety of provisions, answerable to the difference of mens palates, as well as to the difference of the seasons; so our Gospel-scribe, or teacher, in the entertainment of his spiritual guests, is not always to set before them only the main substantials of religion, whether for belief or practice, but, as the matter shall require, to add also illustration to the one and enforcement to the other, sometimes persuading, sometimes terrifying; and accordingly addressing himself to the afflicted and desponding with gospel-lenitives, and to the hard and obstinate with legal corrosives; and since the relish of all is not the same, he is to apply to the vulgar, with plain familiar similitudes, and to the learned with greater choice of language and closeness of argument, and so suit his discourses to the various circumstances, tempers, and apprehensions of his hearers. *Calmet's Commentary, and South's Sermons, vol. iv.*

him : But just as he was going on board, a certain scribe † came, and offered to attend him wherever he went ; but when he understood that no temporal emolument was to be obtained by such attendance, he very probably retracted. A disciple of his own at the same time desired leave †² to bury his father before he went along with him, but he commanded him to follow him, and to leave such offices to the children †³ of this world ; and, when another was for taking leave of his family, and disposing of his effects before he went, our Saviour let him know, (a) “ that whoever laid his hand on the plough †⁴, and looked back, was not fit for the kingdom of God”.

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

While the ship was under sail, and Jesus asleep in the stern, there arose a most terrible storm, so violent and impetuous that the whole ship was almost swallowed up by the waves. Hereupon his disciples, in great consternation, awoke him ; and when he arose, at his rebuking the waves they obeyed his command, and immediately composed themselves into a profound calm †⁵, to the no small astonishment of every one that saw it.

† What might possibly be the motive of this scribe's offering to attend our Saviour, the conjectures of commentators have been different. Some think that he did it with a sincere desire to become his disciple ; others with a design to turn spy upon him ; some out of a spirit of vanity, to distinguish himself, by being a retainer to a master in so great reputation among the people ; and others out of a principle of self-interest, that he might attain some post of honour and advantage upon our Lord's advancement to his kingdom. This indeed seems to be the most probable ground of his resolution ; and accordingly the design of our Saviour's answer is to discourage him from being his disciple upon such secular views, “ the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his own head,” Matth. viii. 20. And therefore much less any accommodation or prospect of preferment for his followers. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*.

†² Some are of opinion, that the disciple who requested this was St Philip, who was the first that adjoined himself to Jesus, and that his father was not actually dead, but only grown so very old that he could not live long ; and therefore the purport of his address to Christ is, “ That for the small remainder of his father's life he might be permitted to live with him, but that after he had paid his last offices to him, he would not fail to return again, and devote himself entirely to his service.” But others understand the words in a literal sense. *Calmet's Commentary*.

†³ The words in the text are,—“ Let the dead bury the dead,” Mat. viii. 22. which is a form of speech common in all sorts of authors, when in the same place they use the same words twice, though very frequently in different senses. Thus the Psalmist, speaking of God, says, “ with the froward thou shalt shew thyself froward,” Psal. xviii. 26. even as Moses introduces God speaking of himself, “ If ye walk contrary to me, I will also walk contrary to you,” Lev. xxvii. 23, 24. where the words froward and contrary, as they relate to God, denote the punishments which he intended to bring upon the obstinate, and are the rather used, because the same words went be-

fore. And, in like manner, “ Let the dead bury their dead, but follow thou me,” may signify, let others bury the dead ; thou hast work of more consequence to do. It must not be dissembled, however, that by the dead, both sacred and profane authors do frequently mean, not only those who, in a natural sense, are dead, but those likewise who in a spiritual sense are so, by being “ alienated from the life of God, and dead in trespasses and sins.” Thus Clemens of Alexandria tells us, that “ the philosophy of the barbarians called those dead who deserted their doctrines, and subjected their minds to sensual pleasures,” which Philo calls the death of the soul, entombed in passions and all manner of wickedness. And therefore the full import of our Saviour's words must be, “ Let those who are unconcerned for the things of God, and unfit to engage in promoting them, perform such offices, which they can do as well as others ; but thou, who hast begun to follow me, and to attend upon the kingdom of God, go on with resolution, and without allowing thyself any avocation from that work :” Hereby teaching us, that they who are called to the preaching of the Gospel, and the salvation of souls, should not suffer any earthly business, which may be done as well by others, who are unfit to be employed in spirituals, to give them the least impediment or molestation. *Hammond's and Whitby's Annotations*.

(a) Luke. ix. 62.

†⁴ “ To put the hand to the plough,” is a proverbial saying, not only among the Greeks and Hebrews, but many other nations, and denotes in general the beginning of any enterprise. This our Saviour applies to spiritual husbandry ; and thereby gives us to understand, that as he who undertakes to plough should not look behind him, for fear of making his furrows crooked or unequal ; so he that engages in the ministry of the Gospel, should not suffer himself to be incumbered with much serving about other matters, but, in the language of the apostle, “ forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ ; Phil. iii. 13, 14. *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

†⁵ The stilling of the raging of the sea was so pe-

A. M. 4035,
&c. or 5440.
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The next morning, as our Lord landed on the east side of the lake, in that part of the province of Trachonitis †, which is called the country of the Gadarens, †² two demoniacs, || most grievously distracted, with some poor rags about them, came running towards him, and fell at his feet, and worshipped him. Hideous spectacles were they both; but one, much fiercer than the other, made dismal outcries both day and night, and cut his flesh with sharp stones; and though he had been often bound with fetters and chains, yet he as often broke them to pieces, ranging (with his companion) among the rocks †³ and tombs, and so very furious and outrageous, that no traveller durst pass that way. Upon their approach to Jesus, the devils (who spake by their mouths) declared him to be the Son of God, and expressed their fear of his being come to * “torment them before their time”. They acknowledged their number to be vastly great, and (if he cast them out of the possessed persons) implored him to suffer them to enter into a herd of swine that were feeding on the mountains not far off. Accordingly he permitted them: Whereupon the whole herd, to the number of two

culiar a prerogative of God, Psal. lxxxix. 9. and cvii. 25. 29. that it is not at all wonderful that our Saviour’s disciples should be convinced of a Divine power residing in him who was able to do this with the breath of his command. *Whitby’s Annotations.*

† This country, which is so called by the Greeks from its rough and craggy mountains, together with Ituræa, made in our Saviour’s time one tetrarchy, i. e. one fourth part, or rather division, (for they were not equal parts) of the kingdom of Herod the Great when he died. It was anciently called Argob, Deut. iii. 13. and, according to the best account, is bounded to the east by Arabia Deserta; to the west, by Batanæa; to the south, by Ituræa; and to the north, by the country of Damascus: And as it was a province full of rocky hills, which served for an harbour to a great number of thieves and robbers, it often found employment for Herod the Great (as we may see in the history of Josephus) to expel them. *Wells’s Geography of the New Testament, and Whitby’s Table.*

†² This, in St Matthew, is called the country of the Gergesens, because it lay in the neighbourhood of the two cities, Gadara and Gergesa, which were both situated within the district of Decapolis. Gadara, which took its name from the tribe of Gad (to whom it fell by lot in the division of the land), was a famous city beyond Jordan, the capital of Paræa (as Josephus de Bello, lib. v. c. 3. tells us), and stood eastward of the sea of Tiberias, about sixty furlongs from the shore. Gergesa was a place of some importance likewise, according to the same historian; and the adjacency of these two towns made the evangelists call the country that lay between them sometimes by one name and sometimes by another. *Wells’s Geography of the New Testament.*

|| There is some difference between the evangelists in their account of this cure: For whereas St Mark, chap. v. 2. and St Luke, chap. viii. 27. take notice only of one demoniac, St Matthew, chap. viii. 28. makes mention of two. Now to reconcile this seeming difference, Dr Lightfoot ingeniously conjectures that one of these two was a Gergesen, and a Jew, and so in casting the devil out of him, our Lord did no more than what he had frequently done in Judea;

but the other a Gadaren, i. e. one of an heathen city, as Josephus testifies; for which reason St Mark and St Luke take chiefly notice of him as a more remarkable instance, because he and the Syrophenician woman were the only two heathens we read of that our Saviour cured. But there is a farther reason for the evangelists taking notice of one rather than the other, and that is,—That the one, in his behaviour, was more remarkable than the other; was possessed of an unclean spirit, called himself legion, and could not be bound with fetters or chains; went about naked, and cutting himself with stones; and when he was cured, distinguished himself by desiring to follow Christ; circumstances all which St Matthew omits, but St Mark and St Luke have particularly related, and upon these accounts might very likely think that he fell more properly under their consideration than the other. *Whitby’s and Beausobre’s Annotations, and Appendix to Dissertation I. of this Book.*

†³ The tombs, which the evangelists here mention, are said to be in the mountains, and in the wilderness: For the custom of the Jews was, to have their tombs, like so many little cells, cut out in the sides of caverns, and hollow parts of rocks and mountains, at some distance from their towns, and usually in very lonely and desert places; into which it was usual for the devils to compel those whom they possessed, in order to confirm men in the vain persuasion, that the souls of those who died in any crime were, after death, turned into devils. *Hammond’s Annotations.*

* St Jerom, upon the passage now before us, is apt to imagine, that as slaves who have a long while run from their master, no sooner see his face but they bethink themselves of the punishment which they have deserved; so the devils, finding our Saviour upon earth, thought at first sight that he was come to judge, and condemn them; and therefore they ask, “art thou come hither to torment us before the time?” i. e. before the time of the last judgment, when they expect no other than to be eternally punished, or (as the Scripture expresses it) “to be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone for ever. *Calmet’s Commentary.*

thousand, ran violently upon the rocks, and, casting themselves headlong into the lake, were all drowned and utterly lost.

The keepers of the swine fled in the utmost fright, and reported this strange accident in the city of Gadara and the neighbouring villages, which brought great multitudes to the place, where they found the man (who had been the more furious of the two) sitting at our Saviour's feet, cloathed, and in his perfect senses. But whether it was that they took amiss the destruction of the swine, or thought themselves unworthy of his Divine presence, so it was that they intreated our Lord to depart out of their country; which accordingly he did: † but instead of permitting the man (out of whom he had cast the most devils) to go along with him as he desired, he ordered him (a) to "return to his house, and his friends, and there to declare what wonderful things the Lord had done for him."

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

As soon as our Lord had repassed the lake, and was returned to Capernaum, the people came flocking about him as usual; and while he was teaching them, one Jairus †², a chief ruler of the synagogue, falling prostrate at his feet, humbly besought him to come and cure his daughter, who was at the point of death; not doubting but that, if he laid his hands upon her, she would instantly recover. The forwardness of the ruler's faith claimed our Saviour's compassion and assistance; and therefore he immediately rose, and followed him: But as he was on the way, and pressed with great throngs of people, a certain woman †³, who had been diseased with an unnatural flux of blood for twelve years, and (in hopes of a cure) had in vain spent all her estate upon physicians, being now confident, that if she could but come to touch the hem of his garment she should be healed, pressed forward: and having got a touch of it privately (as she thought) found herself perfectly sound. But she was not unknown to Jesus; and therefore, when he, perceiving that †⁴ "virtue was gone out of him," turned about in the throng, and

† One reason, as some imagine, why this man desired to be with Christ, was his fear lest the devil at his departure might seize upon him again; and it was partly to avoid the suspicion of vain glory, whereof our Lord might have given some umbrage, had he carried about with him all those upon whom his greatest miracles were wrought, and partly to shew, that in his absence he was able to protect such as believe and trust in him, from the malice of evil spirits, that he would not accept of his company. *Whitby's* Annotations.

(b) Mark v. 19.

†² Some learned men are of opinion, that this ruler of the synagogue was the president of the consistory of the twenty-three judges, who were appointed in every city to punish such offences as were not capital; but it is more generally thought that he was not a civil magistrate, but a leading man in the synagogue of Capernaum, who had, in a great measure, under his direction such things as related to the service of God. We are to observe, however, that the word ἀρχισυνάγωγος is sometimes taken in a strict sense for the person who was the president, the head and master of the synagogue, who (according to this acceptance) was but one; and at other times, in a larger sense, so as to comprehend the presbyters and elders likewise, in which sense the rulers of the synagogue were more than one. How many they were, it is nowhere defined, because that depended upon the largeness of the city, and the number of those who frequented the place of Divine worship; only we may

observe, that Jarius was not the chief president, because he is called one of the "rulers of the synagogue," Mark v. 22. *Vitringa* de regim. Synag. lib. ii. c. 11. *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Hammond's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†³ Eusebius tells us for a certainty, that this woman was a Gentile, living in Paneas, or Cesarea Philippi, a town situate near the head of the river Jordan, Hist. Eccl. lib. vii. c. 18. and upon the report of others, relates this story. "That, by the gate of this woman's house, was erected a brass statue, bearing the effigies of a woman upon her knees in the posture of a supplicant; that opposite to her there stood the effigies of a man in brass resembling our Saviour, stretching out his hand to the woman; that at the feet of this statue, an unknown plant sprung up, which, reaching to the border of his garment, became a present remedy against all manner of diseases; and that these statues were standing even unto the time of the emperor Maximianus, who took them away from this city." But (not to insist on the many exceptions that might be made to this story, which savours much of the superstition of later times) how a woman, who, as all the evangelists inform us, had spent all that she had, should be able to erect two such costly statues, or how the Jews in all their wars, or the Gentiles, who were both bitter enemies to Christianity, should suffer such a confirmation of it to remain so long, we can by no means imagine. *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†⁴ Hence it is evident, that the virtue whereby

A. M. 4035,
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demanding who it was that † “had touched him?” The poor woman came trembling, and, falling down at his feet, declared to all the company, both the cause and miraculous effects of her touching him; which he was so far from blaming, that he commended her faith, and imputed her cure to the wonderful strength of it.

During this transaction the delay proved fatal (as one might imagine) to Jairus; for a message was brought him that his daughter was actually dead, and therefore there was no occasion to give Jesus any farther trouble; but our Saviour, who overheard what the messenger said, bid the father not fear, but only believe, and then he should find the blessed effects of his faith in the recovery of his daughter: but he had scarce spoke these words, when, approaching the house, he found the musicians * and mourners already come, who were deploring her death with melancholy tones and loud lamentations, according to the custom of those times. He desired them, however, as he went in, to cease their funeral ceremonies, because at that time †² there was no occasion for them; and so, with the young woman's parents, and Peter, and James, and John, going into the chamber, he approached the bed where she lay, and, taking her by the hand, commanded her to arise; at which powerful word she immediately revived, and walked round the room, to the no small amazement of her parents. At his departure he ordered them to give her something to eat, and left a strict charge with them that they

our Saviour did these miraculous cures, was not communicated to him, but resided in him, and consequently proves that he was God. For the virtue whereby the prophets and apostles did their cures is ascribed to God; as when it is said that “God did special miracles by the hand of Paul,” Acts xix. 11. but the miracles done by Christ are imputed to “the virtue which went out of him, and healed all that sought to touch him,” Luke vi. 19. “The virtue's going out of him,” however, is a popular expression, which must not be taken in its literal sense, as if it were a quality distinct from the person of Christ, and what might pass from him to another; because the Divine power residing in him was incapable of any alienation or diminution, be the cures he performed never so many, never so miraculous; and therefore the only meaning of the expression must be, that it went out, with regard to us, or according to our conceptions and apprehensions of things, when it discovered and manifested itself in the cure of some disease, or any other outward effects. *Whitby's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

† Our Saviour's disciples, we find, admired at his asking this question, Mark v. 31. but the reason for his doing so, we may suppose, was to discover to the people the greatness of the miracle, which, without this examination, might have gone off without being known; to shew them the strength and virtue of the woman's faith and confidence in his power; and thence to convince Jairus, who began a little to stagger in his faith, that he was able to revive his daughter, even though she was dead, if he did but believe. *Calmet's, Commentary, and Beausobre's Annotations.*

* In all the books of the Old Testament, there is not the least hint given us of any musical instruments employed in funerals. We read indeed of a good deal of mourning for the dead, of mourners hired on purpose, and of the dismal ditties which these people sung, to excite sorrow in others: but the use of mu-

sic was reckoned an incongruous thing, and nowise comporting with the solemnity of this sad season. Among heathen authors there is frequent mention made of it, as a thing long in use, both with the Greeks and Romans; and therefore we may presume, that from these nations it was that the Jews borrowed and adopted it into their funeral ceremonies. That among them it was in use in our Saviour's time, at least among persons of the better rank, is plain from the passage now before us; that it was an established custom in the time of Josephus, is evident from his own testimony; and that it grew into a kind of superstitious use, in the times following, is evident from what the Rabbins enjoin, viz. that none even of the meaner sort should, at the funeral of a wife, have fewer than two flutes, besides the voices of old women, who, by their sad modulation, were to extort lamentation from others. *Selden's Uxor. Hebr. lib. iii. c. 8. Hammond's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

†² The reason which our Saviour gives for this is, —That “the maid was not dead, but asleep,” Mat. ix. 24. Now, in several places of the New Testament especially, death is called a sleep, John xi. 11. Acts vii. 60. 1 Cor. xv. 6, &c. and therefore our Saviour only makes use of this word of a softer signification, not so much with a design to impose upon those to whom he directed his speech, as to testify his humility and great modesty in his desire to conceal his Divine power. The persons he spoke to were certainly those who were preparing for her interment, and performing the funeral rites belonging to it; and therefore he only intimates that she was not so dead as they accounted her, i. e. not to come to life again before the resurrection; but that her death was no more than what he could remove with the same facility as another might be awakened out of sleep. *Whitby's and Pool's Annotations.*

should make the miracle a secret; but their joy was too great to conceal what, in gratitude for so great a mercy, they thought they were obliged to divulge.

In his return from Jairus, our Lord was followed in the streets by two blind men imploring his aid, who, as soon as he had entered the house, came after him, and when he had cured them, were dismissed with a strict charge to conceal the miracle, which, out of the abundance of their joy, they could not do. And no sooner were the blind men gone, but the people brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil, which when he had cast out, the person immediately recovered his speech, to the great astonishment of the multitude, who unanimously acknowledged that the like had "never been seen in Israel;" only the Pharisees persisted in their old malice, and insinuated to the people, (as formerly) "that he ejected devils by the help of some supreme devil," who had the rest under his control, and with whom he was confederate."

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

After a short stay at Capernaum, our Lord departed with his disciples into some other parts of Galilee. About a year before, he had been barbarously treated by the inhabitants of Nazareth, the place of his education; and yet, notwithstanding this, he was resolved once more to make them a fresh tender of mercy. To this purpose he went into their synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and taught the people; but, instead of being converted to the faith, though they were astonished at his abilities, they were scandalized at his person, and began to upbraid him with the meanness † of his parentage and employment as they had done before; insomuch, that, being sensible that †² "a prophet never wanted honour but in his own country," he did not abide with them long, nor did he work any miracles there (except the cure of a few sick persons) by reason of their infidelity.

Upon his departure from Nazareth, he visited most of the cities and villages of Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, preaching the Gospel, and curing all kinds of diseases among the people; and as he observed, one day, the numerous throngs and multitudes that resorted to him, he looked upon them with an eye of pity and compassion, as so many sheep dispersed, and destitute of shepherds, and from thence formed a resolution to send out his twelve apostles (by two and two together) into the more distant parts of Judea, whilst himself continued preaching in Galilee and the places adjacent.

To this purpose * he invested them with a full power to cure all diseases, eject devils, and even raise the dead. He gave them instructions in what manner they were to behave in the places whither they went; but forbade them, at the same time, to ad-

† The word *τέκτων* is of general signification, and denotes any worker, either in wood, mettle, or stone; but the tradition of the church has all along been, that our Blessed Saviour was what our translation has specified a *carpenter*; and Justin Martyr assures us, that he made ploughs and yokes, which at that time were the carpenter's business. However this be, it is certain, that by the Jewish canons, all parents were bound to teach their children some trade; that their most celebrated Rabbins thought it a great reproach not to be of some profession; and that there was a peculiar reason why our Saviour should be of one, and that no very liberal one neither, even to take off all suspicion of his being bred up in curious arts, which his enemies at all times were forward enough to say, notwithstanding the disadvantages of his education. *Beausobre's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†² This was a common proverb among other nations as well as the Jews; and therefore Aristides was wont to say, That "a philosopher was never worse than at home." *Grotius* on Matth. xiii. 57.

* Among all the accounts which the Heathens

have given us of their famous magicians and workers of wonders, there are none to be found who ever pretended to a power to delegate their virtue to others, or to impart their power to them, upon the invocation of their names, or belief of their doctrine. Hence Arnobius (*advers. Gentes*, lib. i.), having summed up the miracles which our Saviour did, adds, "That he not only did them by his power, but permitted many others to do them by invocation of his name, nor did he any peculiar and astonishing miracles himself, that he did not enable his little ones, and even rustics, to perform." Whereupon he asks those he writes to, "Did ever that Jupiter, whom the Romans worship in their capitol, give the like power to any mortal?" And then concludes this to be a demonstration of a truly Divine power: "For to transfer your miraculous power to a man, and to give authority and strength to a creature to do that which you alone can do, is an infallible evidence of one who hath power over all, and the causes of all things at his beck." *Whitby's* Annotations.

A. M. 4035,
&c. or 5140.
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dress themselves to any of the Gentiles or Samaritans, but only “to the lost † sheep of the house of Israel.” He told them the consequences of their ministry, which, (after his death more especially) instead of intitling them to temporal advantages, would expose them to sundry kinds of persecutions; but for their encouragement he acquainted them, that those who rejected their message should be treated with severity, at least at the righteous Judgment of God; whereas those that received them kindly, and gave (were it but a cup of cold water) to the least of his disciples, for their Master’s sake, “should in no wise miss of his reward.” With this commission the apostles went into all the parts of Palestine, where the Jews inhabited, preaching the Gospel, and the doctrine of repentance as part of it, working miracles for its confirmation, and †² anointing the sick for a token of their recovery, whilst our Lord continued the course of his ministry in Galilee.

It was now about a year since Herod Antipas had committed John the Baptist close prisoner to the castle Machærus †³, and upon the return of his birth-day †⁴, having made a splendid entertainment for the lords and chief officers of his dominions, he was infinitely pleased with the dancing of a young lady, daughter to his unlawful wife Herodias †⁵, insomuch, that in the height of his mirth and jolity, he promised (with the addition of an oath) to grant her whatever she demanded, †⁶ though it amounted to half of his dominions. Unwilling to lose so fair an opportunity, she immediately consulted with her mother what favour to ask; who, being prompted by the height of her malice and revenge, named the head of John the Baptist †⁷ to be given her,

† He calls all Israel sheep, though they were not obedient to the voice of the shepherds, as being all chosen people. He calls them lost sheep, because they were in great danger of being lost and ruined by the ignorance and wickedness of their guides; and to them the apostles were sent, because they were the “children of the kingdom,” Matth. viii. 12. to whom the promise of the Messiah was made, Gen. xvii. 1. and “of whom as concerning the flesh he came,” Rom. ix. 5.; and therefore it was the Divine will, that they should be first honoured with the preaching of the Gospel, and alone enjoy the ministry of Jesus Christ, and his disciples, while he continued upon earth. But, upon their rejecting of so great salvation, the apostle’s commission was enlarged. “For it was necessary (says St Paul to the Jews) that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but, seeing you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles,” Acts xiii. 46. *Whitby’s* and *Beausobre’s* Annotations.

†² That it was usual with the Jews to prescribe oil, as a proper thing to anoint the sick, in order to their recovery, Dr Lightfoot, upon Mark vi. 13. has fully proved; nor can we think that the apostles, having no command from Christ to do so, would have used this ceremony, had it not been customary among their countrymen. But whether they did it symbolically, in hopes of obtaining to the patient the oil of gladness, or only medicinally, it is certain, that the virtue which attended it, when used by the apostles, could not be natural and inherent in the oil, but must be supernatural, and derived from him who sent them, because this unction always produced a certain and constant cure in those that were anointed. *Whitby’s* Annotations.

†³ Both the city and fort that were called by this name were situated beyond Jordan, about two leagues from that river, on the north east side of the lake Asphaltites, or Dead Sea, and not far distant from the place where the river discharges itself into it. It was in the hands of Aretas, king of Arabia, when he married his daughter to Herod Antipas; but how it afterwards came into Herod’s possession (as it certainly was when he beheaded John the Baptist), we have no account from history. *Calmet’s* Commentary.

†⁴ That it was an usual custom with kings to celebrate the day of their birth, and that of their accession to the throne, (for the word may be applied to either) with great solemnity, we have an example as old as Pharaoh, Gen. xl. 20.; nor need we doubt but that, on such joyful occasions, there were music and dancing, and all manner of diversions to entertain the company: But that persons of the first rank and distinction should act any part in these diversions, was a rare and unwonted thing; and therefore St Chrysostom, in Matth. Hom. xlix. is of opinion, that Herodias, foreseeing what would happen, forced this young lady upon a thing which would have better become an actress upon the stage. *Calmet’s* Commentary.

†⁵ This Herodias, (as Josephus relates the matter) in contempt of the laws of her country, married again to Herod, the natural brother of her husband, separating herself from him whilst living, although he had a child by her; so that being guilty both of incest and adultery, she might well be called his unlawful wife. *Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 17.*

†⁶ An offer like this we find Ahasuerus (a great Persian monarch) making queen Esther, chap. v. 3.

†⁷ It may not be improper here to take notice of the remarkable Providence of God, in avenging the

which the daughter accordingly demanded of the king in the presence of the whole assembly.

This strange request at first caused an exceeding damp † upon the king's spirits; but having recovered himself, (out of a pretended reverence to his oath, and respect to his nobility then present) he sent an executioner †² who beheaded †³ John, and brought his head in a charger to the young lady, which she presented to her mother; but as for his body his disciples, when they came to hear of his death, took care †⁴ to bury it, and to bring Jesus the news of the tragical fate that had befallen their master.

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

death of this righteous man upon Herod, Herodias, and her daughter. 1st, As the war between Herod and Aretas, king of Arabia, was occasioned by Herod's wicked contract with Herodias to eject his daughter, who was his lawful wife, and to marry her who was his brother Philip's; so Josephus declares, that the Jews looked upon his putting John to death as the cause of the miscarriage of his army, God being angry with him for the death of John the Baptist. 2dly, Envy the glory of her brother Agrippa, upon whom Caligula had conferred the title of a king, Herodias prevailed with her husband to repair to Rome, in order to request the like favour of the emperor; but the emperor, having received a bad impression against him, instead of granting what he desired, deprived him of his government, and banished both her and him to Lyons in France, where they lived ingloriously, and died miserably; and this, according to Josephus, (Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 9.) "was done in punishment of her envy, and of his readiness to hearken to her solicitations." And, 3dly, Of her daughter, it is related, that as she was going over the ice in winter, the ice broke, and let her in up to the head, which, upon the meeting of the ice again, was severed from her body. And this story, if it be true, (as it is confidently told us by Nicephorus, Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 20.) is a wonderful instance of God's avenging Providence. *Whitby's Annotations.*

† Herod was no more than a tetrarch, or one of those four among whom his father's kingdom was divided; but St Mark, chap. vi. 14. gives him the title of a king, as himself no doubt was fond enough of it, and perhaps, in the provinces under his dominion, was generally called by it. Why he came to be concerned at the young lady's desiring so strange a boon as that of the Baptist's head, is no wonder. The very mention of such a thing from such a person, and in such an assembly, was enough to shock any man of less than uncommon barbarity; but then the evangelists inform us, that Herod had conceived a good opinion of the Baptist, as a just and holy man, and when he heard him, (as he did it very gladly) in many things he followed his advice, Mark vi. 20. and not only so, but feared the resentment of the people likewise, (with whom he was in high esteem) when they should come to be informed of the cause and circumstances of his death, Matth. xiv. 5. There might however be another reason, less observed, for Herod's concern upon this occasion. It was now his birth-day; and it was usual, even among heathen princes at such a time, to be gay and merry; to think of no ill omens, to surcease all contentions, and not

so much as to deprive of life, even condemned criminals, on that day, when the sovereign of the country received his, lest they should offend or sadden the genius that presided over their nativity: And therefore it is more than probable that Herod, who was more than half a pagan, might have the same notion of the thing. But if he had not, it can hardly be thought but that such an execution would damp the joy of the meeting, and procure him more enemies among the thinking part of the company than the non-performance of a wicked and illegal oath could have done. *Hammond's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

†² The word *σπικουλάτωρ*, which we render *executioner*, in the history of the Roman emperors signifies a *soldier of the guard*; and among the Jews, Romans, Chaldeans, and Egyptians, it was customary for one of the king's guard to be the executioner of those whom he had condemned to death. *Hammond's Annotations.*

†³ Thus died the great fore-runner of our Blessed Saviour, about two years and three months after his entrance upon his public ministry, in the thirty-fifth year of his age, and was the first who suffered upon the account of the Gospel, though seldom called the first martyr. "He was indeed a man (according to the character which Josephus gives of him) endued with all virtue, who exhorted the Jews to the practice of justice towards men and piety towards God, and also to baptism, which would become acceptable to God, if they renounced their sins, and to the cleanness of their bodies added the purity of their souls." *Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 7.*

†⁴ When Herodias had got the Baptist's head in her possession, it is said, that she thrust his tongue through with her bodkin; and for fear that the head, if buried with the body, should be reunited, and rise again to disturb her unlawful lust, and disquiet Herod's conscience, she buried it in her own palace; but where his disciples buried his body the evangelists have not informed us, only we are so told, that, in the time of Julian the apostate, his tomb was shewn at Samaria, where the inhabitants of the country opened it, and burnt part of his bones; but the rest were saved by some Christians, that carried them to one Philip, an abbot at Jerusalem, who presented them to St Athanasius: but some time after, when Theodosius built a church in honour of the Baptist, in the place where the temple of Serapis stood, Ann. Dom. 396, these holy reliques were reposit in it. Though what became of his head we nowhere read: only the abbot Villeloin tells us in his memoirs, that

About the same time that Jesus was informed of John's death by his disciples, his own apostles returned from their several journeys, and gave him an account of all their transactions. The fame of the miracles which our Saviour, both by himself and his apostles, had wrought, gave Herod some ground to think that the person who did them was John, whom he had unjustly murdered, and who now very probably † was risen from the dead to revenge his blood upon him; and therefore, knowing the subtilty and cruelty of that prince, our Saviour ordered his apostles to prepare a vessel, wherein he and they only might cross the sea of Galilee, and retire for a little while from the multitude to a desert near Bethsaida. But in vain was it for him to think of concealing himself: The people, seeing where he took shipping, ran after him on foot by the lake side, and though they had a great circuit of land to take, were got into the desert almost as soon as he; which singular instance of their zeal so affected his compassion, that though he came to that place for the sake of retirement, he could no longer withhold his presence from them; but ascending a mountain, and taking his disciples with him, he there first instructed them in several things concerning the kingdom of God, and having afterwards cured their sick and diseased, he at last fed them all to the number of five thousand men, besides women and children, with five barley loaves and two small fishes, (having at first invoked a blessing †² upon them), and that with a plenty so exuberant, that the very fragments †³ which remained filled twelve baskets.

This miraculous multiplication made such an impression upon the multitude, that they no longer doubted of his being the Messiah, and were therefore resolved to set

he saw one at Amiens, but that this was the fifth or sixth head of the Baptist, that, in the course of his travels, he had the honour to kiss. *Theodoret. Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 3. Ruffin. Hist. c. 27. and Calmet's Dictionary under the word.*

† Several of the ancient Jewish writers, as well as some modern Rabbins, are of opinion, that the souls of men and women, when they died, went into other bodies, insomuch that they imagine that the soul of Moses was the same with that of Abel, and that of the Egyptian whom Moses slew, the same with that of Cain: But whether the Jews had this notion of the transmigration of souls, (as Josephus, de Bell. Jud. lib. 7. cap. 25. and Philo, de Somniis, seem to tell us), it can hardly be thought that what Herod here says, in regard to our Saviour, was spoken in allusion to it, because it is not conceivable how the soul of John, lately dead, could enter into the body of Christ, which for thirty years and upwards had been informed by another soul. And therefore his words must be understood, not of the transition of the Baptist's soul, but of his reviviscence, or returning to life again. For as it was an opinion among the Jews, that at the coming of the Messiah some of their prophets would rise from the dead, Herod had some reason to suppose that John, whom all the Jews held to be a prophet, might be permitted to return into the world, and perhaps to avenge his death upon the tyrant. *Calmet's Commentary, and Whitty's Annotations.*

†² The evangelists make use of two words upon this occasion, blessing and giving thanks; and by the former of these, some interpreters understand the multiplying virtue which he then commanded down upon the sustenance that he was going to give to the people, and its marvellous increase in the hands of

the distributors, whereby it became a repast sufficient for so large a multitude: Though others think that he did no more than what we call saying grace, i. e. thanked God for his bountiful provision of all things, and begged his blessing upon what he was going to dispense among the people, that it might tend to the wholesome nourishment of their bodies. However this be, it is enough to warrant the indifferent use of these two words, that the forms of address to Almighty God, upon the use of his gifts for our refreshment, have usually been of a mixed nature, as consisting partly of praises and partly of petitions; because the end of such devotions is manifestly twofold, viz. to render our acknowledgments to God for his liberality, and then to beg of him, that the good creatures, which he hath given us, may be sanctified to our use. [The multiplying of the loaves and fishes has long appeared to me as the most singular of all our Lord's miracles; for it seems to imply a creative power in him, by whom it was wrought]. *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. ii.*

†³ It was a sufficient reason for our Saviour's ordering the fragments to be gathered up, and put in baskets, that from them might appear both the reality of the miracle, and the exceeding greatness of the increase; but because our Lord assigns another, by saying, "gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost," he hath herein showed us, that all reserving for the future is not unlawful; that charity is very consistent with frugality; indeed not only that they may, but that they should go together; for God will be sure to make a mighty difference between the virtue and the specious extreme beyond it; between the liberal and the lavish man. *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. ii.*

him up for their king by main force; but he, knowing the mischief of such a design, constrained his disciples (who were forward enough perhaps to join in the thing) immediately to take shipping, and to pass by Bethsaida || to Capernaum, whilst himself dismissed the multitude; and (when he had so done) continued till after midnight in meditation and prayer.

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

In the mean time, the ship where the apostles were on board was tossed with a great storm in the middle of the lake. The waves ran so high, and the wind was so contrary, that as soon as morning appeared, they had not got much above a league on their voyage, when our Saviour came walking † upon the surface of the sea, and drew near towards the ship. This strange appearance †² (which they took for a spirit) increased their fear not a little. Our Lord indeed, to dispel it, told them who he was; but Peter, still doubtful, wanted a demonstration, which when he permitted him to try, and the apostle upon the experiment was ready to sink, he graciously reached out his hand, and with a gentle rebuke for the weakness of his faith, setting him again upon the top of the waves, walked along with him to the vessel; which they had no sooner entered, but the winds, knowing their duty to their Sovereign, ceased. This the rest of the disciples observing, came and adored Jesus, acknowledging his omnipotence, and admiring the Divinity of his power and person; and as it was not long before the ship gained the port, great numbers out of the country, as soon as they understood that he was arrived, brought their sick and diseased on beds, and laid them before him in the streets, beseeching him to permit them only to touch the border “of his garment; and as many as touched him were made whole.

The multitudes whom our Lord had miraculously fed in the desert near Bethsaida, were in expectation of finding him the next morning on the mountain; for they had seen the disciples take shipping without their master, and no other vessel left for him: But perceiving that he was gone as well as his disciples, and having an opportunity of other vessels from Tiberias, they passed over with all expedition to Capernaum, where they found him teaching in the synagogues; and, being in no small surprise, desired to know of him how he got thither? But instead of gratifying their curiosity †³ with a direct answer, he, who knew their corrupt expectations, and that they came after him, not so much for his miraculous gifts as the gratification of their own appetites, took occasion from thence to discourse †⁴ to them of a certain food, different from what he had

|| St Mark tells us, that our Saviour ordered his apostles to cross the sea, and wait for him “on the other side at Bethsaida,” chap. vi. 45. St John writes, that accordingly they entered into the ship, but instead of going where they were directed, they steered their course towards Capernaum, chap. vi. 17.; and yet after all, if we will believe St Matthew, they landed at last, neither at Bethsaida nor Capernaum, but in the country of Gennesareth, chap. xiv. 34. Now, to reconcile this, we need only remember what all the evangelists tell us, viz. that while the apostles were on board, there arose a strong gale of wind, which, blowing from the north, proved, in a manner, quite contrary to them; so that, instead of making the port of Bethsaida, which is on the north coast of the sea of Galilee, the next morning they found themselves on the opposite side, not far from Tiberias, and to the south of Capernaum. Though therefore our Saviour ordered them to go to Bethsaida, yet they could not do it, because the wind was against them. Their next attempt therefore was to get to Capernaum; but even that they could not do; but being forced to yield to the storm, were carried a good way

below to the south of it, from whence they just touched at Nazareth, and thence proceeded to Capernaum. *Calmet's Commentary.*

† Among several other instances of God's omnipotence, Job mentions this as one, that “he treadeth upon the waves of the sea.” Job ix. 8.

†² It was a common opinion among the Jews, that spirits did sometimes appear clothed in a human form; but what put the apostles at this time in the greater fright, was their imagining, that those who appeared at night were usually evil spirits, and that this, which they now saw, might possibly be the demon who had raised the storm. *Beausobre's Annotations.*

†³ We may observe from several parts of the Gospel, particularly from Luke xiii. 23, 24. John xii. 34, 35. that it was usual with our Blessed Saviour to answer nothing to such curious questions as had no tendency to edification, but to divert the people from them, by proposing some more profitable subject. *Whitby's Annotations.*

†⁴ Our Blessed Saviour, through the greatest part of the sixth chapter of St John's Gospel, takes an occasion, from the multitude's coming after him out of

A. M. 4035,
&c. or 5440.
Ann. Dom.
31, &c.
Vulg. Ær. 29.

given them in the desert of Bethsaida, infinitely more deserving of their inquisition, and whereof the manna in the wilderness was no more than a figure or a type. What this food was he signified to them, viz. The merits of his future death and passion, which alone could be available for the obtaining of eternal life to such as believed in his Divine mission, and descent from heaven.

But these sublime truths, which for the present he thought proper to couch in terms obscure and figurative enough, so gravelled the intellects of his auditory, that even his disciples began to murmur, and many of his followers, mistaking the words in a literal, which he intended in a spiritual, sense, and thence inferring that he was not such a Messiah as they imagined, wholly deserted him; insomuch, that he began to suspect the fidelity of his very apostles, until Peter (in behalf of all the rest) declared their fixed purpose of adhering to him, upon full conviction that he was the Messiah, the Son of the living God. But notwithstanding this liberal and frank confession, our Lord gave them to understand, that they were not equally sound, for among the twelve whom he had selected, one of them was to prove a traitor, meaning this of Judas Iscariot, who justly deserved that name, because he afterwards betrayed him.

Whether our Blessed Saviour was at Jerusalem on the third passover after his baptism, the evangelists have not informed us; but it is very probable, that he who came to fulfil all righteousness, would not neglect so great an ordinance. Upon this presumption, it is most generally believed that he was there, though very likely he might not stay long, but as soon as the festival was over return into Galilee, (a) because the rulers at Jerusalem lay in wait for an opportunity to put him to death.

Upon his return into Galilee, a certain number of scribes and Pharisees † were sent from Jerusalem to be spies upon his actions, and to criticise upon his doctrine. These men observing, that when he and his disciples were to eat, they frequently sat down without washing their hands, contrary to the common custom of the Jews, which (as they pretended) was founded upon a tradition *, expostulated with him the reason for so

a greedy desire to be fed, to discourse to them of spiritual blessings, under the metaphors of meat and drink; and for his apology in so doing, we may observe, that among the oriental and Jewish writers, no metaphor was more common than this; that to this purpose Solomon, in his book of Proverbs, introduces Wisdom crying in the streets, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of my wine, which I have mingled," Prov. ix. 5. "For they that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty," says the wise son of Sirach; "for the soul (as Plato expresses it) is nourished by receiving and practising good things; and wisdom, temperance, and piety, are the food of a soul that can suck them in:" That as our Saviour calls himself the bread which came down from heaven, Philo upon the words of Moses descants, "what food can God rain down from heaven, but that heavenly wisdom which he sends down upon the soul that desires it?" That as he exhorts the people to labour for the meat that perishes not, Philo declares, that the wisdom of God is the "nurse and nourisher of those that desire incorruptible diet," L. de eo quod deterius, p. 137. And from hence we may perceive why our Saviour insists so much upon this metaphor, even because it was familiar to the Jews, and used by their most celebrated writers. *Whitby's Annotations.*

(a) John vii. 1.

† The sanhedrim, which sat at Jerusalem, and was

the supreme court in all religious affairs, sent messengers to John the Baptist, when he began his preaching, enquiring who he was, and by what authority he baptized, John i. 19. and as the Pharisees had charged our Saviour's disciples with a violation of the Sabbath, in plucking and rubbing the ears of the corn, and himself with the same crime in curing the sick on the Sabbath-day, it is not improbable that these accusations had reached Jerusalem, and that the scribes and Pharisees here mentioned were emissaries sent from the sanhedrim to watch and observe our Saviour. And this seems the rather to be so, because they were so very ready (when they could find him guilty of no violation of the laws of God) to pick a quarrel with him about some rites and ceremonies of the church, which he and his disciples thought not so very necessary to be observed. *Pool's Annotations.*

* The traditions in the Jewish church came to gain credit upon this presumption, that Moses, when he received the law from God on Mount Sinai, which he recorded in his five books, was instructed, at the same time, in several things which God enjoined him not to commit to writing, for fear that the heathens should transcribe them: That, in these things, Moses instructed his successor Joshua, and from Joshua they were transmitted, through the elders of the people, by oral conveyance only, until Ezra, after the return from the Babylonish captivity, collected them all to-

doing : but (instead of answering them directly) he put another question to them, by way of recrimination, viz. Why they, by their pretended traditions †, vacated the laws of God, particularly that so solemn one of honouring their parents, and relieving them in their wants? And, thereupon, looking upon them as so many hypocrites †², with whom he disdained to hold any farther converse, he turned to the multitude, and informed them, “ that true piety did not consist in outward ceremonies, but in a sincere observance of the laws of God ; that no pollution could be in what entered into a man’s mouth, but only in what proceeded from it ; for (as he afterwards explains the thing to his disciples) whatever we eat does not affect the mind, the only seat of defilements, for it passes into the stomach, and is soon thrown out of the body, so that, be it never so gross or unclean, it cannot pollute the eater ; but all pollution is from within, from the corruption of the heart, such as impure thoughts, unchaste desires, unholy purposes, immodest and indecent speeches, &c. These are the things that leave a lasting stain

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

gether, and made the Cabbala, in seventy-two books, which was kept by Gamaliel, and others that succeeded as heads of the Sanhedrim, until the destruction of Jerusalem : That about an hundred and twenty years after this, R. Judas, the son of Simon, composed a book of them, called the Mishna, i. e. the second law, which is indeed the most ancient collection of traditions that the Jews have : That three hundred years after this, R. Jonathan, meeting with more, compiled them into a larger volume ; and an hundred years after this, another Rabbi made a collection of such as were found among the Jews who remained in Babylon : That these two (which are a kind of supplement and explication of the Mishna) are called, the one the Talmud of Jerusalem, and the other of Babylon ; and that by these the Jews, at this day, are governed in matters ecclesiastical, all the world over. In relation to the particular custom of washing before meat, their canon is, that “ Whosoever despiseth the washing of hands, is worthy to be excommunicated ; he comes to poverty, and will be extirpated out of the world :” for (according to the sense of one of their doctors, viz. R. Aquiba) “ he that takes meat with unwashed hands is worthy of death,” and therefore, when the same doctor was in prison, and had not water enough, both to drink and wash his hands, he chose to do the latter ; because “ it is better,” says he, “ to die with thirst, than to transgress the tradition of the elders.” It is no wonder then, that persons, inured to those notions, should so readily take exception at our Saviour’s omitting what were indeed (though they thought not so) matters of an indifferent nature. *Pool’s, Whitby’s, Hammond’s, and Beausobre’s* Annotations, and *Lightfoot* on Mat. xv. 2.

† The way whereby the Jews made the law of honouring and subsisting their father and mother of no effect, was, by pretending, that whatever their parents requested of them was a corban, i. e. that they had devoted it as a gift or offering to God, or to his temple ; and, whatever was thus devoted, was not to be touched, be the necessity never so urgent : for their canon about vows was,—That “ they reach even to things commanded, and take place as well in things required by the law as things indifferent ; that a man may be so bound by them, that he cannot, without

great sin, do what God had commanded to be done ; and that, in this case, if he makes a vow which cannot be performed without breaking a commandment, his vow must be ratified, and the commandment violated.” This was a superstition which the Pharisees and other doctors of the law, who had a property in the gifts and oblations that were made to the temple, thought themselves concerned to indulge ; and therefore, when any pretended that their parents stood in need of their help, they told them, that if they did but acquaint them that it was a gift, or that they had vowed such a portion of their estate to sacred uses, that would, before God, excuse them from relieving them : Nay, they affirmed farther, that if a man did but in a passion say, that the thing which another asked of him was a corban, though it were not actually consecrated to religious uses, this was vow enough to prevent his relieving that other person, even putting the case that it were his own father ; unless they should absolve him from it, which they would undertake to do for so many shekels of silver, Levit. xxvii. Such abundant reason had our Blessed Saviour to charge the Jewish doctors with making one of the greatest commands in the second table of the law void by their tradition concerning vows. *Pool’s* and *Whitby’s* Annotations, and *Pocock’s* Miscel. p. 415.

†² In several places of the Gospel, our Lord calls the Pharisees hypocrites, not only because they placed the worship of God, and a great deal of sanctity and religion, in ceremonies of human institution, and, though they pretended to extraordinary purity, did all their good works to be seen of men, Matth. xxiii. 5. ; but more especially in this place, because, being superstitiously careful to avoid the outward pollution of the body, by abstaining from the touch of any thing which they reputed unclean, and washing their hands whenever they thought they had done so ; they left that which was within, viz. their hearts and affections, full of iniquity, uncleanness, extortion, and excess, Matth. xxiii. 25. and Luke xi. 39. ; but from Christ’s example in this particular, we must not be forward to pronounce men hypocrites, because we have neither that authority nor that knowledge of their hearts which he had. *Whitby’s* Annotations.

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upon the soul, which a thing so merely external as omitting to wash before meat cannot do."

This was a doctrine not well pleasing to the Pharisees, as his disciples told him; but they were a set of people whose censure he justly despised, "blind leaders of the blind," as he properly enough calls them, whose vain traditions, as having nothing of Divine institution in them, his purpose was to abolish. And from thence, in departing to the coasts of Tyre † and Sidon, he entered into an house, with a design to conceal himself; but a certain Syrophœnician woman, having got intelligence where he was, came, and earnestly requested of him to cure her daughter, who was sadly tormented with a devil. Our Lord, for the trial of her faith, seemed at first to take no notice of her, until his disciples, to get rid of her importunity, desired him to grant her request, and dismiss her. His ministry, he told them, was confined to Judea, nor was he properly sent to any but "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." All this the poor woman heard; but so far was she from being discouraged by such coldness, that, advancing nearer, she threw herself prostrate at his feet, imploring his help for her child; and when (in an harsh metaphor) he told her, that "it was not proper to work those miracles for an heathen, which were originally designed for God's people, the Jews," the afflicted mother owned indeed the truth of what he had alleged, but then (continuing the same figure) she humbly hoped, "that a poor distressed heathen might, in some small measure, partake of the mercies which were more peculiarly promised to the Jews." Which answer was so highly expressive of the woman's humility, faith, and reliance, that he granted her petition; so that, when she returned home, she found her daughter laid upon the bed, and perfectly well.

From the coasts of Sidon our Lord passed eastward to Decapolis, †² and from thence towards the Sea of Galilee, where in his way he cured a deaf and dumb man, by putting his fingers †³ in his ears, and some of his spittle upon his tongue; and thence repairing

† Both the ancient and present condition of Tyre, we had occasion to take notice of before, vol. ii. p. 579, 580, in the notes; and now to do the like to Sidon. It is generally supposed to have took its name from Sidon, a son of Canaan, Gen. x. 15. and upon that account to be one of the most ancient cities in the universe. It was formerly very strong both by art and nature, having on the north side a fort, or citadel, built on an inaccessible rock, and environed on all sides by the sea. The commodiousness of its situation made it a great place of trade, which brought in vast riches, and made the inhabitants not a little luxurious, insomuch, that to live "after the manner of the Sidonians" is the Scripture phrase, Judges xviii. 7. for to live voluptuously. At present it is strangely altered from what it was; for though it is well enough stocked with inhabitants, yet it is very much shrunk from its ancient extent, and much more from its splendour, as appears from the great many beautiful pillars which lie scattered up and down in the gardens without the present walls. Tyre and Sidon were seated both on the Mediterranean Sea, about twenty miles distant from each other, and the country adjoining to them, which lay to the west and north of Galilee, was called the coasts or territories of Tyre and Sidon. The old inhabitants of this tract were descendants of Canaan (for Sidon was his eldest son), and continued in possession of it much longer than they did of any other part of the country. The Greeks call it Phœnicia; and when, by right of conquest, it became a province of Syria, it took the name

of Syrophœnicia; and from hence the woman, whom St Matthew calls a Canaanite, is by St Mark styled a Syrophœnician, as being, both by religion and language, a Greek. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, c. 7. and *Maundrell's Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*.

†² It is a country in Palestine, which was so called because it contained ten cities, some situated on the east, and others on the west side of the river Jordan; the 1st and principal city is Scythopolis, and the rest, according to Pliny, are, 2d, Philadelphia; 3d, Raphanæ; 4th, Gadara; 5th, Hippos; 6th, Dion; 7th, Pella; 8th, Gerasa; 9th, Canatha; and, 10th, Damascus; though others reckon them after another manner, as Pliny himself observes, lib. v. c. 18. *Calmet's Dictionary* under the word.

†³ Christ often made use of visible signs to represent that divine invisible virtue which was inherent in him, and which, upon that occasion, he intended to exert: And therefore, because deaf persons seem to have their ears closed, he put his fingers into the man's ears, to intimate, that by his power he would open them; and because the tongue of the dumb seems to be tied, or to cleave to the palate, therefore he moistened it with spittle, to signify that he would loose and give free motion to it. These, it is true, were not capable to effect the cure, but they had this use in them, that they excited the observation and attention of the people before whom these cures were wrought, *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

to a mountain, he not only cured every person that was brought unto him, whatever his malady or distemper was, but, in the conclusion, fed all the multitude, which amounted to four thousand men, besides women and children (and who, for three days successively, had been attending him), with "seven loaves and a few small fishes."

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

Having thus dismissed the company, he embarked with his disciples for the coast of Dalmanutha †; but no sooner was he arrived there, than the Pharisees, joining with their enemies the Sadducees, came and demanded of him a sign from heaven, in order to convince them that he was the true Messiah: But having first upbraided them with their acuteness in discerning the face of the sky, and from thence the prognostics of fair or foul weather, and their blindness in not perceiving the manifest signs of the Messiah's coming, he remitted them (as he had done before) to the miracle of his own resurrection, and so sailed back with his disciples.

His disciples, in the hurry of their departure, had forgot to take bread with them; and therefore when our Saviour, in their passage, gave them caution to take care of the heaven * of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and they were ignorant enough to take his words in a literal sense, he first gently reprov'd the blindness of their understandings, and the shortness of their memories, who had so soon forgotten his miraculous multiplication of the loaves and fishes at two different times, and then gave them to understand, that his words did not concern the heaven of bread, but the corrupt doctrines of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

With this discourse they landed at Bethsaida, which (though the birth-place of several of his apostles) had by the perverseness and infidelity of its inhabitants so offended him, that, when a blind man was presented to him for cure, he would not do it in the city in the sight of the inhabitants; but taking him out of the gate, he anointed his eyes with his spittle, and laid his hands on them. The man at first saw objects indistinctly, men like trees walking, but when our Lord had laid his hands upon him the second time, he restored him to his perfect sight; and so sent him home, with a charge †² not to return into the city, nor to discover the thing to any person belonging to that place.

From that place he departed into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi †³, where, being minded to make some trial of his apostles faith and proficiency, he demanded of them what opinion mankind had of him, and whom they took him to be? Some (say they)

† What St Matthew calls Magdala, St Mark names Dalmanutha; and the reason hereof is, because these two places lay very near together, and Dalmanutha very probably within the precincts of Magdala. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

* The leaven of the Pharisees was their hypocrisy, and too scrupulous observance of the traditions of their elders; and that of the Sadducees was their denial of the existence of angels and devils, the resurrection of the body, and the immortality of the soul; so that the meaning of our Saviour's caution to his apostles is,—To avoid the principles of those who place the sum of their religion in outward performances, which avail nothing to the sanctification of the soul; and to reject all such doctrines as tended to subvert religion, by cutting off all hopes of happiness in a future state. *Calmet's Commentary* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†² The reason of our Saviour's giving the man this charge, is founded upon the infidelity of the people of Bethsaida, wherewith he upbraids them, Matth. xi. 21.

†³ This city is situated near the head of the Jordan, and was by the Canaanites called Laish or Leshchem, Judg. xviii. 7. but being taken by some of the Danites, it was by them called Dan, and is generally reputed the utmost border northward of the land of Israel. It was usually called by heathen writers Paneas, from the adjoining spring Paneum or Panion, which is commonly taken for the fountain-head of Jordan. Augustus Cæsar gave it, and all the territories belonging to it, to Herod the Great. He having rebuilt the place, gave it and the tetrarchy of Ituræa and Trachonitis, to which it adjoined, to his youngest son Philip, who, when he had enlarged and beautified it, so as to make it the capital of his dominions, and chief place of his residence, gave it the name of Cæsarea Philippi, partly to compliment Tiberius Cæsar, who was then emperor, partly to preserve the memory of his own name, and partly to distinguish it from another Cæsarea mentioned in Acts x. 1. situate on the Mediterranean, and built by his father, in honour of his great benefactor Augustus Cæsar. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*.

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take you to be John the Baptist † risen from the dead; some Elias sent down from heaven; and others Jeremias, or some other of the ancient prophets restored to life again: But when he continued asking what their notion of him was, and Simon †² (in the name of the rest) had made an open confession that he was Christ, the Son of the living God, he not only allowed that confession to be true, and what was confirmed by the attestation †³ of God himself, but, in allusion to the name he had given him, which signifies a *rock* †⁴ or *stone*, he told Simon, "That he would make him a foundation stone, or a prime minister †⁵ in building his church, which should be so firmly esta-

† Those who held that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead, were of the same opinion with Herod the tetrarch, Matth. xiv. 2. and seem to have imbibed the notion of the Pharisees, who (according to Josephus) used to say, that "a good man might easily return to life again." Those who took him for Elias, ran into the general opinion of the nation, that Elias was to come before the Messiah, and anoint him when he came; and therefore, notwithstanding his doctrine and miracles, they could not conceive him to be the Messiah, so long as his mean appearance was contrary to their expectations: And those who thought him to be Jeremias, seem to have espoused the sentiment of some of their doctors, who looked upon that prophet as the head of the whole order, not improbably upon the character which God gives him, "Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee, and before thou wast out of the womb, I sanctified and I ordained thee a prophet to the nations," Jer. i. 5. *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

†² That the rest of the apostles knew and believed the great truth which St Peter here declares, no one can doubt, who calls to mind the attestation made of it before by John the Baptist, John i. 34. the frequent confessions of it by evil spirits dispossessed before their eyes, Mark iii. 15. and that full declaration of it in the name of the whole fraternity, "We believe and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God," John vi. 69. for which reason we find the fathers, upon this occasion, speaking of St Peter as the mouth, the tongue, the voice of the church, and a kind of foreman to the rest of the apostles; for this they might think a matter of decency and good manners, a means to prevent confusion and disorder, and a token of that union and harmony which was among them, that one man should speak for all the rest. And why that one man should be St Peter rather than any of the rest, may very reasonably be imputed to the seniority of his age, the natural fervor of his temper, and his longer attendance upon our blessed Saviour than several of the rest had been employed in. These are sufficient reasons for his delivering the judgment of the company, and for our accounting his confession the common voice of all, to a question which had evidently been propounded to them all. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

†³ The words in the text are, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee, but my Father which is in heaven," Matth. xvi. 17. but how did God reveal this to St Peter? Those who pretend that he had a particular revelation, not vouchsafed to any others,

without which he could not have owned Christ to have been the Son of God, must not only allow the like revelation to Nathanael, John i. 49. to the centurion who was present at our Lord's crucifixion, Matth. xxvii. 54. and to all others who made declaration of the same faith; but must likewise excuse all those Jews who did not believe in Christ, because it was not in their power so to do without this peculiar revelation. Without running ourselves into these preminires therefore, we may reasonably conclude, that the sense of our Saviour's words is this,—“What others say of me, viz. that I am John, Elias, Jeremias, or the like, this thou hast learnt from men; but the faith which thou hast now confessed concerning me, though it required of thee a due attention to the proofs given of it, yet since those proofs are the doctrine which I teach from God, and the miracles done in confirmation of it, are apparently the finger of God, thy faith must be acknowledged to be the result, not of human wisdom, but of Divine Revelation. God has given thee a teachable and intelligent mind, to perceive, by my doctrine and miracles, that I am the true Messiah, notwithstanding the obscurity of my appearance, and therefore thou mayest be truly said to be taught of God, because my doctrine is the word, and my miracles are the power of God.” *Whitby's* Annotations and *Calmet's* Commentary.

†⁴ Peter was so called, either because his being the apostle of the Jews, to whom the Gospel was first tendered, might make him, in some sense, one of the first foundations of the Christian church, Eph. ii. 20. or because the firmness and resolution wherewith he supported the Christian cause, even to the day of his martyrdom, was very eminent and remarkable. *Beausobre's* Annotations.

†⁵ It is very evident, that, whereas the word church is capable of two senses, and, taken in common speech, sometimes for a society of persons worshipping God, and sometimes for a place set apart for the public performance of such worship, our Saviour intends it here in the former of these senses, and that the building of this church (which is a metaphor of frequent use in the New Testament) signifies the doing all those things, either in private Christians or public communities of them, which may contribute to their growth in grace and goodness, their mutual strength and support, their perfection and continuance; and accordingly Christians, thus united together, are called a spiritual house, 1 Pet. ii. 5. "an heavenly building, fitly framed together, and an habitation of God through the Spirit," Eph. ii. 21, 22. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

blished, that all the power † and policy of its enemies should not be able, at any time, to destroy it; and that, for the more orderly government of it, he would give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, so that his sentence, whenever it should regularly exclude or admit any person into the bosom of the church upon earth, should, in like manner, be ratified and confirmed in heaven." But then to prevent the ill use that might be made of this discovery, he strictly charged his apostles || not to declare to any man that he was the Messiah.

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

Perceiving by this discourse with Peter, that his disciples had got a right notion of his office and Divinity, he began thence-forward to prepare their minds for his sufferings, and to talk more openly of his death and resurrection. One day therefore, as he was insisting on the sufferings which he was to undergo at Jerusalem ||², and Peter, unable to endure a thought so disagreeable to the dignity of his Master, desired him to desist †²,

† The words in the text are,—“The gates of hell shall not prevail against it,” Mat. xvi. 18. Some interpreters mean by the word *hades*, which we translate *hell*, the state or place of the dead; and by the gates of *hades*, the power of death; and so the words, applied to the members of Christ's mystical body, or to particular Christians, will mean, “That though, at present, death has the dominion over them, yet shall not his conquest of those that die in the Lord be absolute and final. They shall not continue dead to all eternity; but shall revive, a second time, to a better life, and triumph over this last great enemy of mankind.” Others by *hell* understand the place of infernal torments; and so, by an easy figure, apply it to the devil and his angels, inhabiting those regions of darkness; but then, because the gates of cities are not only, in all countries, places of strength, but, among the Jews more especially, were places of judicature, and where magistrates met to consult for the security of the public, it hence comes to pass, that by the gates of *hell* they mean the strength and policy of the wicked, and so make the sense of our Saviour's promise to be this,—“That notwithstanding all the wicked contrivances of Satan and his instruments, to destroy the profession of Christianity in the world, yet all their power and policy should not be able to effect it. Christ's holy religion should stand and flourish, in despite of their wicked contrivances; and, however a defection might happen in some particular places, to the end of the world, he should never want a society of men, confessing, with St Peter, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God,” Mat. xvi. 16. *Whitby's* and *Hammond's* Annotations, and *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

|| In several parts of the Gospel we find our Saviour enjoining the people whom he had cured, not to make any publication of his miracles, Matth. viii. 4. and ix. 30. but it is an injunction of a particular nature, not to discover that he was the Christ, though this was an article necessary for every man to know and believe in order to his salvation. Now, though this was a point necessary for all to know, yet the apostles were not the proper persons at this time to declare it, because it might look like a kind of confederacy between them, if they should prove too lavish in the commendations of their master. It would much better become his infinite wisdom, therefore, to find

out himself a proper opportunity for the discovery of this great truth, without drawing the envy of the Pharisees upon him, and obstructing the progress of the Gospel, which could hardly be believed, considering the low circumstances wherein he appeared; and which, had it been believed, might have encouraged the attempt of the Jews to come, and make him a king, John vi. 15. What therefore our Saviour says to his three apostles, in relation to his transfiguration, that they should “tell no man of it until he was risen from the dead,” Matth. xvii. 9. is applicable to this passage likewise. For after his resurrection, they were by office to be his witnesses, and to declare to others that he was the Christ, because they could then do it, not only without suspicion of confederacy, but with greater advantages and success, after that Christ had taken possession of his kingdom, and had testified this, by sitting down at the right hand of Power, and by sending down upon them the Holy Ghost, to enable them to confirm their testimony, *Pool's*, *Beausobre's*, and *Whitby's* Annotations.

||² Jerusalem was the place where this tragedy was to be acted, because, as our Lord observes, “a prophet could not suffer out of that city,” Luke xiii. 33. for there sat the Sanhedrim that was to try him, and there lived the Roman governor, who had the power of life and death, and was to condemn him. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†² Peter's words in the Greek are *ἰλεώς σοι, Κύριε* Matth. xvi. 22. which we may render *propitius esto tibi, Domine*, “favour thyself, or be kind to thyself.” “Since the rulers at Jerusalem have such malevolent designs against thee, why shouldst thou think of going any more among them? If they intend to evil intreat thee, and take away thy life, be thou kind and favourable to thyself, avoid the danger by keeping at a distance from it, and consult thine own preservation by continuing here.” This seems to be the proper sense of St Peter's words, and they were doubtless spoken with a good intention, and singular affection for his master, but still they argued great weakness in him, in pretending to contradict one whom he had just before acknowledged to be “the Christ, the Son of God,” and denote him ignorant of the redemption of mankind by that death, which God in his wise counsel had determined. *Pool's* Annotations, and *Young's* Sermons, vol. ii.

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he gave him a very sharp rebuke †, as a person whose advice crossed his gracious purposes of man's redemption, and savoured of nothing but worldly grandeur; and therefore to extinguish in them all notions of a temporal kingdom, he called his disciples, and told them, that "whoever pretended to profess his religion, should take up his cross †², or patiently submit to all manner of persecutions, in sure and certain hope of an happy immortality, which he would procure for his followers when he was in his kingdom, in which some that were then present among them, ere it were long, (but certainly before the day of their death) †³ should see him happily instated."

|| About eight days after this, our Lord, to revive the hearts of his disciples, as well

† The words of our blessed Saviour upon this occasion are,—“Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence to me,” Matth. xvi. 23. Not that we are to think that our Saviour ever imagined that St Peter, in this advice, had any pernicious designs against men as the great enemy of mankind has, when he tempts, and deludes them into sin; but his only meaning is, that his interposition in this affair was very unseasonable, and highly repugnant to his design of coming into the world, which was to save it. “Thou thinkest, perhaps, says he, Peter, that in this thy advice thou shewest thy kindness to me as a friend that respects my welfare, and art tender to my preservation; but instead of that, thou art an adversary to me, (for so the word Satan signifies, Numb. xxii. 32. 2 Sam. xix. 23. 1 Kings v. 4. &c.) in thy endeavouring to draw me aside from doing what is my Father's will and command, John x. 18. I told thee that I must suffer; that such is the determinate counsel of God, and such my fixed purpose and resolution; and therefore all advice to the contrary is so far from pleasing, that it is an offence to me; I cannot away with it; and therefore “get thee behind me Satan:” for though there is no malice in thy intention, yet imprudently hast thou run upon the same advice that Satan uses the most successfully of all others to undo men by, and that is, the advice of self-indulgence. For favour thyself is the most artificial of all the suggestions of the devil; because that being made specious with the pretences of reason and justice, and sweetened by its agreeableness to that self-love with which all men do naturally abound, it seldom fails of being swallowed, though poison and death lurk under it.” *Pool's* and *Whitby's* Annotations. *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Young's* Sermons, vol. ii.

†² Among several nations it was a custom for the criminal to bear the cross whereon he was to suffer to the place of execution, Lipsius de Cruce, lib. ii. c. 65. and in allusion to this, our Saviour makes use of the phrase to denote our cheerfully bearing those trials and persecutions, which the Divine Providence brings upon us in the execution of our duty, and our adherence to his most holy religion. *Pool's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

†³ Our Saviour's words are these:—“Verily I say unto you, there are some of them who are standing here, who shall not taste of death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom,” Matth. xvi. 28. Some interpreters, both ancient and modern, understand this passage of our Lord's transfiguration on the Mount, in which there was some glimpse of the glo-

ry of his Father and the attendance of angels; but besides that this happened too soon (no more than six days) after these words were spoken, to need the expression of “some of them not seeing death” until it came to pass, which must at least denote some distance of time; it is very plain that, at this wonderful sight, none of the three apostles could behold Christ coming in his kingdom, because his kingdom did not commence till after his resurrection, when “all power, both in heaven and earth, was given him,” Matth. xxviii. 18. Others imagine that the passage relates to the great day of judgment, because it is said that Christ will “reward every man according to his work,” chap. xvi. 27. But then, on the other hand, it may be alleged, that there was none in the company then standing there who was not to die, or to taste of death (which is the Jewish phrase), long before the coming “of that great and terrible day of the Lord:” And therefore others have concluded, that “this coming of Christ in his kingdom” relates to another event, viz. The destruction of the Jewish church and nation, wherein our Lord may properly enough be said to, “come in the glory of his Father, and with his angels,” and to reward the Jews in destroying them, and Christians in preserving them, according to their works. This happened above forty years after our Saviour's death, when some of the company (as particularly John the evangelist was) might be then alive and witnesses of the accomplishment of our Lord's menaces against that devoted city and nation. This is the popular interpretation at present; but I cannot see why the other parts of our Saviour's exaltation may not be taken into the account; for as he began to enter upon his kingdom by his resurrection and ascension into heaven, so his sending the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, as well as the terrible judgment which he brought upon the Jewish nation, may all be looked upon as the effects and consequences of his glorious reign. *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

|| What St Luke calls (ὧς ἡμέραι ὀκτώ) “about eight days,” chap. ix. 28. St Matthew and St Mark make “after six days:” But the reason of this seeming disagreement is, that the two last evangelists compute only the entire days between our Saviour's discourse and his going up into the Mount, and therefore style them six; whereas St Luke, including both the days of his discourse and his ascent, calls them eight days. And this is evident from the word ὧς, which, when any sum is mentioned, is always

as to instruct them more fully in the nature of his kingdom, thought it not improper to give some of them at least a specimen of his future glory; and accordingly taking with him his three most intimate apostles, Peter, James, and John, he ascended an high mountain †, and there (while he was employed in prayer) he was suddenly transformed into another kind of appearance; for a bright lustre darted from his face, more glorious than the sun, and a dazzling splendour piercing from his body through his garments, made them appear whiter than snow, and more radiant than the light. During this heavenly scene, there appeared Moses and Elias, cloathed with all the brightness and majesty of a glorified state, familiarly conversing with him, and discoursing of his death and sufferings.

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

While the intercourse continued between these three, Peter and his two fellow apostles were fallen asleep; but waking just before their departure, they were exceedingly surprised and terrified at the sight of so much glory and majesty. Peter indeed begged of his Master that they might continue in that happy place, "and erect three tents; one for him, and the other two for Moses and Elias:" But while he was thus talking, scarce knowing what he said in his fright and transport, a bright and shining cloud suddenly came over them, and a voice from thence proclaimed, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Upon which the apostles were seized with a greater consternation than ever, and fell prostrate upon the ground; but upon our Lord's touching and encouraging them, they looked up and saw none but him, for the other two were vanished.

As they descended the Mount, he strictly commanded them not to tell any man what strange things they had seen "until he was risen from the dead." They were ready to obey his commands, but did not rightly understand his last words †², and therefore they had some altercations among themselves concerning the meaning of his "rising from the dead:" And another difficulty they had to solve; for having seen Elias with our Saviour upon the Mount, they could not forbear asking him, What reason the scribes and Pharisees had for asserting, that that prophet was to come upon the earth before the Messiah? To which our Saviour replied, That these Jewish doctors were not mistaken in their notion, because Elias was in effect come already, and had

added to signify that it is not exact, but wants something to make it complete, as may be seen in Matth. xiv. 21. Luke i. 56.—iii. 23.—xxiii. 44. John iv. 6.—xix. 14. Acts ii. 41, &c. *Whitby's Annotations.*

† That this was Mount Tabor (which stood in the midst of the Lower Galilee, at an equal distance between the Mediterranean and the sea of Tiberias) is a matter confirmed by the voice of all antiquity; but some modern writers are of a different opinion, because Tabor (say they) does not stand in the way between Cæsarea Philippi and Capernaum, and that our Saviour travelled from Cæsarea to this mount (which is almost through the whole length of Galilee) is a little too much to suppose; Lightfoot in Mark ix. But this he had space enough to do in the six intervening days between his discourse and his transfiguration; and that he really did so is made very probable, both from St Matthew and St Mark, who seem to intimate, that after he had finished his discourse with his disciples, he entered immediately upon his journey; and accordingly we hear nothing more of him until the expiration of six whole days, Matth. xvii. 1. Luke ix. 28. As to the description of the Mount itself, see vol. ii. p. 58. in the notes; only we may add here from Mr Maundrell, that on the top of it are three grot-

tos, made to represent the three tabernacles, which St Peter proposed to erect, in the astonishment that possessed him at the glory of the transfiguration. *Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*, p. 112, 113.

†² The doctrine of the general resurrection they could not but understand; for that the Pharisees believed, Acts xxiv. 15. and of that Martha makes acknowledgment, John xi. 24. nor could they be ignorant of the meaning of any particular man's rising from the dead; for of that they had instances in the Old Testament, and had lately seen an example of it in the gates of Nain, Luke vii. 15. but being taught out of their law that Christ "was to abide for ever," John xii. 34. and that "of his kingdom there should be no end," Luke i. 33. they could not tell how to reconcile his death (which was to be previous to his resurrection) to the predictions of the prophets, and their own conceptions of his temporal kingdom; and therefore we may observe, that when Christ was dead their hopes died with him; "We trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel," Luke xxiv. 21. but that, at his resurrection, they revived again, which made them ask, "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" Acts i. 6. *Whitby's Annotations.*

A. M. 4035, received the same bad treatment from his countrymen that he himself, in a short time, &c. or 5440. was to expect; from whence they perceived, that by the Elias he spoke of, he plainly intended John the Baptist.
Ann. Dom. 31. &c.
Vulg. Ær. 29.

THE OBJECTION.

“THE pool of Bethesda, if what St John (*a*) relates of it be true, was certainly one of the most remarkable places in all Jerusalem. Its cures were so wonderful, and so highly conducive to the honour of the Jewish nation, that, for what reason the other evangelists should say nothing of them, we can hardly imagine; but why Josephus (*b*), who professedly wrote the history of the Jews, and is always forward enough to boast in their praise, should give us no manner of account of this peculiar manifestation of God’s distinguishing Providence over that people, is a thing utterly unaccountable. Since the evangelist therefore stands alone in this story, it would have been some satisfaction to his readers, had he a little more minutely recounted when this pool first acquired its miraculous quality, and how long it retained it; upon what particular occasions, and how oft the angel descended to trouble its waters; and by what means its waters, when troubled, became both impregnated with a sanative virtue, and yet so limited in their operation as to cure but one diseased person at once.

(*c*) The raising of the widow’s son to life again might possibly be a true miracle, (*d*) though instances there have been of the mistaken death of persons, who, from a state of lethargy, have revived; as might be (*e*) the case of the ruler’s daughter likewise, (*f*) because we find our Saviour so strictly enjoining her parents to conceal the miracle. But, whatever may be said in behalf of these, it is highly improbable, that what (*g*) happened to the demoniacs, in the country of the Gadarenes, should be true, (*h*) not only because the Jews, who dwelt in these parts, were prohibited to eat swines flesh, and, (*i*) under the pain of an anathema, forbidden to keep any in their country; but, even upon the supposition that the swine belonged to the neighbouring Gentiles, it will be no easy matter to vindicate the goodness and justice of Christ, in permitting so large an herd thus to be destroyed, and their owners injured in so egregious a manner.

(*k*) Our Lord’s transfiguration on the Mount was, doubtless, a glorious sight; but still we are at a loss for the reason of his appearing in such an extraordinary manner at this time rather than another; (*l*) for his making a mountain rather than a valley the scene; and his apostles (who were of his party), rather than the multitude (who wanted conviction), the witnesses of this his majesty; nor can we conceive, why the true Moses and Elias, not any spectres or apparitions in their likeness, should be present with Jesus on the Mount, and the apostles overhear them discourse together, and yet not leave us one word of what was the subject of their conversation.

We cannot but admire likewise, why John the Baptist, who was sent into the world for this very purpose, that he might (*m*) ‘bear witness of Christ,’ (as if he had now forgot himself, or was grown diffident of what he had so often testified to others), (*n*) should

(*a*) Chap. v. 2,—8.

(*d*) Woolston on the Miracles.

(*g*) Matt. viii. 28, &c.

(*k*) Matt. xvii. 1, &c.

(*b*) Woolston on the Miracles.

(*e*) Luke viii. 41, &c.

(*h*) Woolston, *ibid*.

(*l*) Woolston, *ibid*.

(*c*) Luke vii. 11,—16.

(*f*) Woolston, *ibid*.

(*i*) Spencer, de Leg. Heb. p. 117.

(*m*) John i. 6, 7.

(*n*) Matt. xi. 2, &c.

send his disciples to enquire of him, whether he was the true Messias or no. Why our Blessed Saviour, who, 'as a Teacher sent from heaven,' was to instruct the people in the most plain truths, made use of the parabolical method, wherein there is a manifest obscurity, especially since the declared end of his doing so is said to be, (a) 'that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.' Why he did not (b) vouchsafe the Pharisees a sign from heaven, to approve himself the prophet foretold by Moses, especially since the sign of the prophet Jonas, which was only typical of his future resurrection, was incompetent for a present sign, and incapable of giving them any satisfaction: Or, lastly, why he made such mean instruments, as obscure, illiterate fishermen, to be the first preachers of the Gospel, when, in all subsequent ordinations, a tolerable stock of knowledge and learning, as well as some influence and authority among the people, is thought no bad qualification for that office.

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

Whether the evangelists have given us a right representation of our Saviour's behaviour, we shall not pretend to determine; but a person of a philosophic soul, much more of a Divine original, should be seated above all passionate resentments, one would think, and look upon his enemies, if he had any, with pity and contempt, rather than with (c) anger and indignation: And so calm and composed should his whole deportment be, as to give no umbrage to any, much less to his nearest relations, who may be presumed to know him best, to call in question the soundness of his intellectuals, or to come to apprehend him at any time, under pretence that (d) 'he was beside himself.'

Whatever some protestants may imagine, we cannot but think, that our Blessed Lord invested St Peter with a certain pre-eminence above the rest of his apostles, when upon him he promises (e) 'to build his church, and to give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven.' But what the (f) unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost does properly import, and in what sense we are said (g) 'to eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and to drink his blood,' both protestants and papists have been at a long puzzle to find out: And therefore no wonder that some of our Lord's first disciples, upon hearing of these (h) 'hard sayings,' which are not yet discovered, and perhaps never will, (i) 'went back, and walked no more with him.'

ST JOHN, according to the general sense of antiquity, having perused the other evangelists, and observed in what particulars they were defective, at the persuasion of the other bishops of Asia was prevailed upon to write his gospel, as a supplement to their omissions. Whoever will give himself the trouble to compare his history with that of the other evangelists, will find this notion in a great measure verified. For (not to mention other particulars) our Saviour's miracles, antecedent to his resurrection, as they are recorded by St John, are no more than eight. 1st, His turning water into wine at the marriage of Cana in Galilee. 2d, His telling the Samaritan woman the secrets of her life. 3d, His healing the nobleman's son at Capernaum. 4th, His curing the lame man at the pool of Bethesda. 5th, His feeding five thousand men with five barley-loaves and two fishes. 6th, His walking upon the surface of the water, and calming the storm at sea. 7th, His giving sight to a blind man by anointing his eyes with clay. And 8th, his raising Lazarus from the dead. Now all these are omitted by the former evangelists, except the 5th and 6th, which St John seems to have recorded, chiefly to introduce a moral discourse, which our Saviour took occasion to make to the people, and which the other sacred penmen had omitted; which is a plain argument, that the intent of St John's Gospel was to supply the defects of the other three; and that therefore their silence is no manner of argument against St John's account of the pool of Bethesda.

ANSWER.

(d) Luke viii. 10.
(e) Matt. xvi. 18, 19.
(i) Ibid. ver. 66.

(b) Matt. xvi. 1, 3.
(f) Ibid. xii. 31.

(c) Mark iii. 5.
(g) John vi. 53.

(d) Ibid. ver. 21.
(h) Ibid. ver. 60.

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&c. or 5410.
Ann. Dom.
31. &c.
Vulg. Ær. 29.

It may seem a little strange indeed, that Josephus should give us no account of it, especially when the sanative virtue of its waters, occasioned by so extraordinary a means, could not but redound to the honour of his country. (a) But when it is considered that the like omissions have been frequently made by other historians, who in their writings have neglected to insert several considerable matters of antiquity, merely because they were so familiar and well known to them; (b) when it is considered that Josephus in particular wrote his history for the information of the Greeks and learned Romans, who were heathens, and, for fear of shocking their belief, is very tender of dwelling too much upon miracles; when it is considered that he is entirely silent in several other instances that bear some relation to our Saviour Christ; that he does not so much as intimate the slaughter of the infants at Bethlehem, mentioned by St Matthew (c), nor give any clear account of the Roman census, or taxation, which occasioned our Lord to be born at Bethlehem, as it is recorded by St Luke (d); when it is considered that the miraculous cure of the impotent man by Jesus had so visible a connection, that he could not, in decency, give an account of the one without making some mention of the other, and therefore chose rather to decline the history of both; and, lastly, when it is considered that this pool (according to (e) Tertullian) ceased to be beneficial to the Jews, upon their final perseverance in blasphemy and infidelity against Christ;—there is no wonder at all that Josephus, who was very defective in other matters, and no great lover of miracles, should omit giving us an account of a pool, whose virtue was extinct and gone, when first he wrote his Antiquities, and which he could not well make mention of, without giving an implicit honour to Christ.

[The truth, however, is, that Josephus doth speak of the waters or fountain of Siloam as something very remarkable, and relates of it one prodigy, which, if real, renders perfectly credible that which is recorded of its sanative powers by St John. In the excellent speech by which, during the last siege of Jerusalem, he endeavoured to persuade his countrymen to submit to Titus, he says (f)—“The springs, which when in your power were dry, now flow plentifully for Titus; for ye know that, before his coming, Siloam, and all the other springs that were without the city, did so far fail, that water was sold by distinct measures; but they so abound to your enemies, as not only to suffice for themselves and for their cattle, but even for watering the gardens. The same wonderful sign ye also formerly experienced, when the fore-mentioned king of Babylon (*Nebuchadnezzar*) made war against us, took the city, and burnt the temple.” If the waters of Siloam were thus made an instrument in the hands of God to punish the rebellious Jews by supplying their enemies, (and when the theocratic government of Judah is considered, the thing is perfectly credible) the same waters which, in one of the prophecies of Isaiah (g) are represented as emblematic or typical of the mild and beneficent reign of the Messiah, may easily be conceived to have been miraculously endowed with their sanative quality at the feast of the passover for some years before he actually appeared publicly preaching the kingdom of God.]

That upon the death of our Blessed Saviour, this pool might lose its sanative quality, is no improbable conjecture, because the Jews no longer deserved such a peculiar blessing; but when at first it came to be impregnated with it, is not a matter of so easy solution. The words in the text are, that “an (h) angel went down (*κατὰ καιρὸν*) at a certain season,” which (i) a learned author chuses rather to render “at the season (i. e. of the passover) and troubled the water;” from whence he infers, that the first time of this supernatural moving of the water, and consequently of the pool’s receiving a miraculous healing quality, was at this passover; which was the second after

(a) Bishop *Smallbrooke’s* Vindication, p. 498. (b) Dr *Pearce’s* Vindication, part iv. p. 19.
(c) Chap. ii. 16. (d) Chap. ii. 1, 2. (e) Adv. Jud. c. 13. (f) *Bell. Jud.* lib. v. cap. ix. § 4.
(g) Ch. viii. 6, 7. (h) John v. 4. (i) Dr *Pearce’s* Vindication, part iv.

the commencement of our Saviour's public ministry; and the reason he assigns for its being this, rather than any other passover, is,—“That our Saviour having gone through all the cities of Galilee, and most of the other parts of the country of Judea, preaching and healing diseases, came up to Jerusalem at the passover, with an intent to fix his abode there; that, to prepare his way before him, God might give this pool an healing quality, (a) thereby to shew the Jews (in a typical manner) that the messenger of the covenant was coming among them, to “open a fountain (b) to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness;” but that, instead of giving him a kind reception, they took “counsel together, how they might take away his life,” which made him “withdraw himself from them,” and, upon his departure, the miraculous virtue of the water ceased.” The only objection against this hypothesis is, that it makes the miracle of no more than a week or ten days continuance, which is too short a space for so great a company (as is here represented) to be gathered together; to have taken up their abode (as it were) in the apartments of this hospital; and to be acquainted so perfectly (as the paralytic, in his discourse with our Saviour, seems to be) with the nature of the pool, and the manner of its preternatural perturbation. And therefore (to follow the generality of commentators), though we should suppose that its medicinal virtue began at the time of this second passover, yet we may still adhere to the opinion of Tertullian, and say, that at certain times at least, it continued with the Jews (and a singular blessing it was) until they had filled the measure of their iniquity, (c) “by denying the Holy One, and the Just, and by killing the Prince of Life †.”

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

How the waters of this pool came by their sanative quality, opinions, in some measure, have been divided. Our (d) learned Hammond (who sometimes affects a singularity of interpretation) * supposes, that the waters became medicinal by being impregnated with an healing warmth from the blood and entrails of the sacrificed beasts that were washed there, and that the angel in the text is not to be understood of any of those celestial beings that are usually distinguished by that name, but only of a common messenger, viz an officer or servant of the priests, who, at a proper season, was sent by him to stir the pool. The great (e) Bartholine supposes, that these waters were naturally medicinal, and that their commotion was occasioned by an extraordinary fermentation of some mineral in them; and therefore he makes the angel no more than a Divine power, which originally gave this efficacy, though it was exerted in a natural way. But besides that the word *ἄγγελος* seldom occurs in the former, and never in this sense, in any historical narrative in Scripture, there are these plain objections against both hypotheses, viz. (f) That, be the waters impregnated with what ingredient we please, (had their operation been mechanical) they must necessarily have cured more than one person at every commotion or fermentation; and yet they never can be sup-

(a) *Whitby's Annotations* on John v. 4.

(b) *Zech. xiii. 1.* (c) *Acts iii. 14, 15.*

† [It is in the highest degree improbable that it did not acquire its sanative virtue till our Lord's second passover; nor do I see any reason for supposing with *Whitby* that an angel *visibly* descended into the water, for if the water was visibly moved without any physical cause known to the Jews, and acquired after the motion, its miraculous quality, they would naturally attribute its motion to a good angel, as they would have attributed it to a devil or dæmon, had its acquired qualities been pernicious. That it was deprived of its virtues when the Jews had filled up the measure of their iniquities, and were rejected by God, follows of course, if the reason which we have as-

signed for its being first endowed with those virtues be the true one; and this will fully account for the silence of *Josephus* respecting those virtues, which, though he might perhaps have heard of them, he could never have witnessed, and probably did not believe.]

(d) *Annotations* on the vth. chapter of *St John*.

* [I certainly think with our author and *Whitby*, that *Hammond's* interpretation of this passage cannot be maintained; but it contains several observations worthy of notice, and well deserves to be consulted by the reader.]

(e) *De Paralyticis N. Test.*

(f) *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Bishop Smallbrooke's Vindication*, p. 507.

A. M. 4035,
&c. or 5440.
Ann. Dom.
31, &c.
Vulg. Ær. 29.

posed of efficacy enough to cure all manner of diseases in an instant, and at one single immersion, as the waters of Bethesda are represented to do: And therefore, waving all such groundless suppositions, we may be allowed to set the authority of an ancient father of the church against these modern names, and say, "That the angel which descended at a certain season gave the water its medicinal virtue; for the nature of the water was not sanative in itself, (if it had, cures would have always happened) but the whole depended on the virtue communicated to it by the angel."

Now the true reason why the virtue thus communicated to the water by the operation of an angel, was effectual only to the curing of one person at one time, was to evince the miraculousness of the cure. Had many been cured at once, the sceptic might have imputed their cures to the natural virtue of the water, and, upon this supposition, been emboldened to ask, "Where is the wonder of this? Do not many medicinal baths cure various kinds of diseases, and multitudes of such as labour under each disease, provided their case be curable? Had one only indeed been cured, the first that could get in after the troubling of the water, there would have been then a great and real miracle; but now the numbers make the fact suspicious. To make it appear a miracle indeed, its effects should have been confined and limited to particular times and persons, and otherwise so circumstantiated, as that the power of God, and not of blind nature, might have been apparent in it." But all this language is effectually silenced by the method which the wise Providence of God took in this case, and the miracle established upon such evident conviction, as the mouth of infidelity itself cannot gainsay.

That the widow of Nain's son, and the ruler of the synagogue's daughter, were both of them really dead, is evident from the sense of all that were about them, who were actually carrying the one to his burial, and making preparation for the funeral of the other; so that had not our blessed Saviour been confident of the Divine virtue residing in him, whereby he was able to recover them to life again, it would have been madness in him to have attempted to do it.

"He might suppose, perhaps, that there was a mistake in the people that were about them, and that these two young persons might possibly be in a lethargic state." But besides the folly of presuming upon a thing which scarce happens once in a century, how could he tell that upon his touching the bier of the one, or the hand of the other, and calling upon them, they would instantly awake? And if they did not awake at his call, his whole pretensions of being a prophet sent from God, with power to restore life to the dead, must as effectually have been ruined, as if the persons here supposed in a lethargy only had actually been dead. But now, if we examine a little into our Lord's conduct in both these cases, we shall find that he acted, not upon any supposition of mistake in the people, but out "of the fulness of the Godhead that dwelt in him bodily." He, coming to the city of Nain, attended with his disciples, meets at the gate the funeral of a certain young man, "the only son of a woman that was a widow." The consideration of her destitute condition moved his compassion indeed; but for all that he might have let the funeral pass. None of the company either asked or challenged him to raise the dead youth: It was entirely his own offer; and an offer that no wise man who set up for a prophet would have ever made, had he not been conscious (as we find he was) that he was able to perform it.

While he was at Capernaum, a person of some note requests of him to go and heal his daughter, who was at the point of death. Before he could get to the house, a messenger comes and acquaints the father that she was actually dead. (a) Here our Lord had a fair opportunity to excuse himself; for though he might pretend to cure diseases, (which was all that Jairus requested of him) yet it did not therefore follow that he was to raise the dead. But instead of retracting, he offers of his own accord to go forward,

and tells the father, (as he afterwards did) that he would have said, "Be not afraid; only believe, says he, and she shall be made whole;" which he could never have said from any other principle than a consciousness of that (b) "Almighty Power, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself."

From Matth.
23 Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

But though our Lord was conscious of his Divine power, yet, upon his coming to the ruler's house, instead of making any ostentatious boast of it, we find him, by the modesty of his expression, the "maid is not dead, but sleepeth," endeavouring to conceal it. It is, in a great measure indeed, owing to his modesty and great humility, that instead of proclaiming, he requires the people so frequently to suppress the fame of his marvellous works: But in the present case, he might have some regard to the character of Jairus, as ruler of the synagogue, and by this advice of silence, dispense with his speaking publicly of a miracle which might possibly draw the malice of the scribes and Pharisees upon him, as well as upon himself. In the case of his raising Lazarus, we find that, (c) "because, by reason of him many of the Jews went away and believed on Jesus, the chief priests consulted, not only how to destroy Jesus, but to put Lazarus likewise to death:" And much of the same design might have been suspected (which our Saviour by this kind caution endeavoured to prevent) if it once came to their knowledge, that so great a man as a governor of the synagogue, by the miraculous recovery of his daughter, had forsaken the religion of his ancestors, and was become a convert to the Christian faith.

[But our Lord's chief reason for prohibiting those who were miraculously cured by him from proclaiming his fame, was probably to allow himself time to lay the foundation of his church on earth. Had his fame been proclaimed everywhere, and himself attended by all whom he had restored from disease to health of body, and from diabolical possession to soundness of mind, either the chief priests and scribes would have brought him to a premature death, before he could have taught his disciples all those important truths which the Holy Ghost afterwards brought to their recollection, and which formed the subject of that preaching by which they converted the world; or the people who looked for a temporal deliverer, would have taken him, as they often endeavoured to do, and placed him by force on the throne of David. Had either of these things happened, the great purpose for which he came into the world would have been defeated. Had he fallen in a civil war occasioned by himself, instead of being believed to have made his soul an offering for sin, he would have been looked on as a rebel to the powers that were, who had justly suffered for his rebellion; and though, on the other supposition, his death might have made atonement for the sins of the world, his disciples would have been left by him but half instructed.]

Gadara was one of the cities beyond Jordan, belonging to the country called Decapolis, which was sometimes in the hands of the Jews and sometimes of the Syrians, but at this time was inhabited by both. The Syrians were heathens, and consequently made use of swine, not only for food, but for sacrifices likewise: and it is not improbable that the Jews of the country might be tempted to feed swine by the advantage they made in selling them to their heathen neighbours. (d) This was against a prohibition of their law, it is true, but laws we know are not always observed, and perhaps least of all at Gadara, which being in the extremity of the Jewish territories, and under the jurisdiction of heathens, left the Jews without any restraint upon them, but that of conscience, which is too frequently violated for the sake of gain.

To bring the matter then to a narrow compass. The swine which were destroyed, in consequence of the permission which our Saviour gave the evil spirits to enter into them, belonged either to the Jews or Gentiles of Gadara: if they belonged to the Jews,

(a) Luke viii. 50.

(b) Phil. iii. 21.

(c) John xii. 10. 11.

(d) Dr Pearce's Vindication, part ii.

A. M. 4035
Ann. Dom.
31, &c.
Vulg. Ær. 29.

it ~~and~~ ^{breaking their own laws} and constitutions, which forbade them to keep any; nor can our Saviour's right of inflicting the punishment be called in question, because it was a received maxim among the Jews, that any person invested with the character of a prophet, and acting by the Spirit of God, might, without the assistance of a magistrate, put the laws in execution against offenders *: and therefore, we who acknowledge our Jesus to have been more than a prophet, can never be at a loss to account for his exercising an authority among the Jews, which (according to their own confession) was allowable in the lowest of that order. But if the heathens of Gadara were the owners of these swine, our Saviour might be induced to permit the devils to enter into them, not only to teach them the sacredness of the Jewish laws, which they, on account of the prohibition of swine's flesh, may be supposed to have ridiculed; but to cure them likewise of their idolatrous worship of demons, and to engage them to embrace the Christian faith. For when they saw our Lord's power over such a multitude of devils, exhibited in their possession of such a number of swine, (had they made a right application of the miracle) they could not but perceive the truth and Divinity of his doctrine, and the madness of their worshipping such impure spirits, as were both cast out of the men at his command, and could not enter into the swine without his permission.

They could not but perceive, I say, that our Saviour was a prophet sent from heaven; that what he did was by a commission sent from God; and consequently, that he could not be guilty of any injustice in the destruction of the swine, which, upon this supposition, was not his act, but the act of Providence. He indeed, as a man, had no right to destroy the people's swine, but God, who is the Supreme Proprietor of the whole earth, most certainly had; and shall we then complain of him for such a punishment as this, when every day we see more surprising instances before our eyes? When we see him laying whole nations waste with pestilence, with famine, and with earthquakes, shall we confess his sovereign Authority in these cases, and yet upon the loss of two thousand swine, cry out, and say, "why hast thou done this?" The heathens themselves (upon the supposition of a Providence) will acknowledge this to be unreasonable; nor can our Saviour (as acting by a Divine commission) ever be justly blamed, because he once or twice did the same thing which God does every day.

But after all, whether the proprietors were Jews or Gentiles, (a) the words in the text do not imply that our Saviour was either principal or accessory to the destruction of the swine. St Mark indeed tell us, that he gave the devils leave; and St Luke, that he suffered them to enter into the swine: but by this is meant no more than that he did not prevent them; that he did not interpose his Divine Power in order to hinder them from entering. But if this made our Saviour a sharer in the destruction of the swine, by parity of reason, it will make God (because he permits it) answerable for all the evil that is done under the sun. Thus, whether we suppose the Jews or heathens owners of the herd of swine, our Saviour's permitting the devils to enter into them made him not accessory to their destruction; or if it be said that he did it with a punitive intent, it was either to make the Jews suffer for the breach of their law, or the heathens for their obstinate idolatry; which his character of a prophet, and the testimony of his being the Son of the Most High, without all controversy authorised him to do.

To know the true end and design of our Saviour's transfiguration, it may not be improper to look back a little into the context, where we find, that after Peter's confessing him to be (b) "the Christ, the Son of the living God, from that time began he to shew

* [The maxim was perfectly just and free from that wild fanaticism, which has been the source of similar maxims among some Christians. The Jewish constitution was indisputably a *theocracy*, and therefore every prophet really inspired was an extraordinary

minister, sent occasionally by the sovereign to direct the ordinary magistrates in the administration of the law.]

(a) Dr Pearce's Vindication, part i. p. 28.

(b) Mattii. xvi. 21, &c.

unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. Nor was this all, for he foretold them that they likewise were to suffer many grievous persecutions for his name's sake, and therefore he recommended to them the unpleasant doctrines of (a) "self-denial, and taking up the cross and following him," with this great (though distant) encouragement, that (b) "when the Son of Man should come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, he should then reward every one according to his works."

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1

These predictions, doctrines, and promises, were so contrary to the expectation of his disciples, who hoped in him to have a temporal prince and deliverer, a restorer of the decayed state of Israel, and promoter of themselves to great honours and employments, that our Saviour thought proper, (not many days after) in order to revive their faith and trust in him, and (c) to fortify their minds against what was likely to ensue, to take as many with him into the Mount as made up a legal evidence, and there to give them an ocular conviction of what he had promised, in recompence of what they were to suffer, by assuming for a while the lustre * and appearance of a glorified body; which so raised their drooping hearts, that we find St Peter immediately declaring, (d) "Lord, it is good for us to be here; and if thou wilt let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." For the design of these words is, not only to secure his Master by staying in that retreat, from the sufferings and death which would be the consequence of his going up to Jerusalem, (as St Chrysostom and others understand it), but to express likewise the pleasure and satisfaction he took in this transfiguration and glorified company; and how he resumed fresh spirits and comforts from a miracle, which was emblematical of the glorious state, not of Christ only, but of all good Christians after their resurrection.

The only instance we have in Scripture of any transfiguration like unto this, is in the case of Moses, (e) after he had been forty days and forty nights with God on Mount Sinai; for upon his descent, we are told, "that the skin of his face so shone, that the children of Israel were afraid to come nigh him, and therefore he put a veil on his face while he talked with them." That our Blessed Lord, in the act of his transfiguration, might probably have respect to this preceding one of Moses, and, both in the nature of the change, and the place where it was wrought, design some conformity thereunto, is what we are at liberty to suppose; and consequently can account why the scene of this transaction was in a mountain rather than a valley: And why the three apostles, Peter, James, and John, and not the whole multitude, were allowed to be spectators of it, we have several reasons to allege.

For besides that this was a vouchsafement fit only to be communicated to such as were of his more immediate confidence, and stood in the highest degree of his esteem; to such as, for their zeal and affection to him, were honoured and distinguished (f) with a peculiar title, and, after his resurrection, appointed by Providence to be the great pillars of his church; and besides, that it would have looked like vanity and ostentation in him to have taken the multitude into the Mount, and there made a public sight of his miracles, which was the thing he always carefully declined: Besides this, I say,

(a) Matth. xvi. 24, &c.

(b) Ibid. ver. 27.

(c) *Younge's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 360.

* This is the proper meaning of the word μεταμορφωθῆναι. For μορφή, both in the Old and New Testament, doth not signify the essence or constituent properties of a man, but only his external shape or appearance: as when it is said of Belshazzar (Daniel v. 10.) and of Daniel (chap. vii. 28.) that ἡ μορφή αὐτοῦ ἠλλάχθη, "their forms were changed;" of Nebuchad-

nezzar, that ἡ μορφή αὐτοῦ ἐπέστρεψεν ἐν ἑαυτῷ, "my form returned to me" (Dan. iv. 36.) and of Christ, that he appeared to two of his disciples, ἐν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ, "in another form," (Mark xvi. 12.) and therefore the word which is derived from it can extend no farther than to a change of the outward form or appearance only. *Whitby* on Phil. ii. 6.

(d) Luke ix. 33.

(e) Exod. xxxiv. 28, &c.

(f) Luke vi. 13.

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&c. or 5440.
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31, &c.
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there seems to be something in the transfiguration itself, which might have been of dangerous consequence for the multitude to have been admitted to.

St Peter, who himself was one of those who were with him on the Holy Mount, gives us this account of it. (a) "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, says he, when we made known unto you the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty; for he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Now, (b) by his majesty in this place, most properly is to be understood that lustre and radiancy wherein he appeared, when his "face shone as the sun, and his garments (pierced through with the beams that were darted from his body) became as white as light (c):" For to shine as the sun, is a phrase expressing something belonging to celestial majesty; and white and splendid garments are proper for kings, and (d) royal ministers of the heavenly court. And, in like manner, by the excellent glory, from whence the voice proceeded, can be meant nothing but the bright and shining cloud that then appeared, which the Jews call the Shechinah, and is made up (as most imagine) of an host of angels, the constant symbol of the Divine presence. And how great and magnificent this symbol is, we may in some measure learn from the vision of the prophet Daniel (e): "The ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool. His throne was like the fiery flames, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him; thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him."

Supposing then that this was the manner of our Saviour's transfiguration; that not only in his own person he was arrayed with all this glory and lustre, but had likewise an angelic host surrounding him, two of the greatest prophets of ancient ages attending him, and a voice from heaven, declaring him to be the well-beloved Son of God: While the multitude stood by, and saw and heard all this, it would have been almost unavoidable, but that, upon such conviction of his being the Messiah, (f) "they would have taken him by force, and made him a king." But since (as our Saviour tells us) his (g) "kingdom was not of this world," nor to come with the pomp and observation which the Jews expected; and since one of his great concerns was, that no disturbance of the civil government should be occasioned by him, or laid to his charge, he wisely made choice of three only (but these the principal of his apostles), to whom he exhibited a specimen of his future glory; which had he done to the multitude, it might probably have occasioned a general insurrection; and as he came down from the Mount, he charged them, "that they should tell the vision to no man till after his resurrection."

From the word *ὄραμα*, which we render *vision*, some have supposed, that Moses and Elias were not there in their proper persons, but that the apostles, in their fancy and imagination, had only a strong idea or impression of them; or, at most, that their spectres, or some shadowy resemblances of them, only were there. Since the evangelists, however, speak of them in a personal character and capacity; since they represent them as talking with Christ, and speaking of his decease which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem; since they tell us, that when they were come out of the ecstasy into which this vision had cast them, they saw two men standing with him;—it is much more probable to think, that Moses and Elias were really there, and that God had, somewhere or other, from the time of their departure out of this world, preserved both their bodies to this end. The Scriptures, indeed, are express as to Elias, that he was translated into heaven by the ministry of angels, resembling (h) a chariot of fire, and horses of fire; and it is a pretty general opinion, (i) both among Jewish and Christian au-

(a) 2 Pet. 16, &c. (b) See *Whitby*, on 2 Pet. i. 16. (c) Matth. xiii. 43. (d) Rev. iii. 4.
(e) Dan. vii. 9, 10. (f) John vi. 15. (g) Ibid. xviii. 36. (h) 2 Kings ii. 11.
(i) Vid. Dissert. de *Calmet* sur la Mort et la Sepulture de Moyse, vol. iii.

thors, taken (as is supposed) from some Apocryphal book, that Moses did not die, but was translated into heaven, or some terrestrial paradise, in the same manner as were Enoch and Elias. There is a passage in St Jude, where (a) Michael the archangel is said to contend with the devil, and dispute about the body of Moses, which (if taken in a literal sense) will greatly favour this opinion; for if we can but suppose that (b) the contest between this good and evil angel, concerning Moses's body, related, not to its burial (as some will have it), but its assumption into heaven, or some other place of happiness, which the devil might oppose, and urge the obligation of his dying the common death of all men, for this reason more especially, because he had once taken away the life of an Egyptian: If we can but suppose, I say, that the contest arose upon this subject, then may we easily conceive, both how Moses might subsist in a separate state from the time of his assumption; and how he, together with Elias, might be dispatched from thence, upon this occasion, to set off the lustre of our Lord's transfiguration, by their appearing at the same time in their resplendent robes of glory.

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1 to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

And indeed if this was the purpose of their errand, what subject can we suppose so proper, and so well becoming the conversation of three such illustrious persons, as the redemption of mankind by the death and passion of the Son of God? What these two ancient prophets had in their times imperfectly revealed; nay, what the angels of heaven desire, at all times, to look into, viz. the harmony of the Divine attributes in this stupendous work, (c) "the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, and (d) the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge; (e) Mysteries which have been hid from ages and from generations, but are now made manifest to the saints." These were the sublime subjects (for these are implied in (f) "their speaking of Christ's decease") of their conversation at this interview; and, in comparison of these, how jejune and worthless are all the wise sayings of philosophers, or compositions of human wit? With good reason, therefore, might the great apostle of the Gentiles, (who himself was no mean proficient in what the world falsely calls knowledge), instead of "the (g) excellence of speech and wisdom, determine to know nothing among his Corinthians but Jesus Christ, and him crucified:" For (h) "we preach Christ crucified, (says he) unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God; for (i) of God he is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

The Scriptures, upon all occasions, acquaint us, that the Baptist, through the whole course of his ministry, had borne constant and ample testimony to our Saviour's Divine mission; that he exhorted those who came to him to rest their faith, not on himself, but on "him that should come after him;" and that, as soon as he was acquainted who he was, by a visible descent of the Holy Ghost and a voice from heaven, he made it his business to dispose the Jews in general, and his own disciples in particular, to receive and reverence him, by testifying every where that he was the "Son of God, the Lamb of God, who came from above, and spake the words of God, and to whom God had not given the Spirit by measure." And yet, after all this, (k) some are of opinion, that the Baptist might have the same conception of Christ's temporal kingdom that the rest of the Jewish nation had, and that his long and irksome imprisonment might, by this time, have tempted him to doubt, whether he, who by birth was his relation, and from whose assistance, very probably, he expected a deliverance, was in reality the Messiah. (l) It seems however not a little injurious to the character of the Baptist to suppose,

(a) Jude, ver. 9.
(e) Col. i. 26.
(i) Ibid. ver. 30.
Epistles and Gospels, vol i.

(b) Vid. *Whitby*, in locum.
(f) Luke ix. 31.
(k) *Lightfoot* and *Beausobre*, in locum.

(c) Rom. xi. 33.
(g) 1 Cor. ii. 1, 2.

(d) Eph. iii. 18, 19.
(h) Ibid. i. 23.
(l) *Stanhope* on the

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&c. or 5440.
Ann. Dom.
31, &c.
Vulg. Ær. 29.

either his constancy so shaken, or his behaviour so inconsistent with itself, as, after such open and solemn a declaration, to admit of any doubt whether our "Lord were he that should come," i. e. the long promised and universally expected Messiah. And therefore † the safest way is, to conclude that he did not send this message with a design to satisfy any scruples of his own, but purely for the sake and conviction of his disciples who brought it; to set them right in their notions, and confirm them in the belief of Jesus, and so turn them over to their proper and better Master, now that himself was upon the point of leaving the world. And this was the rather necessary, because their immoderate zeal and partial respect for the Baptist had hitherto made them averse to Jesus, and envious at his honour and miracles. What John had discoursed to them formerly upon this subject had made but little impression upon them; and therefore, in compassion to their infirmities, he condescended to have their scruples propounded in his own name: And our Saviour's method of resolving them (which was by shewing them that the miracles which he wrought were the same in kind that the Messiah was to do) gave so great satisfaction, that when their former master was gone, they repaired to him with the melancholy news of his death, and (according to the received tradition) for ever after became his constant disciples.

(a) The frequent use of parables and emblems in the discourses and writings of the oriental sages, and especially of the Jewish doctors *, is so very well known, that a man must discover his ignorance who pretends to assert, that our Blessed Saviour attempted any innovation when he first began to instruct the people in a parabolical way; since several of his discourses of this kind, particularly that (b) of the rich glutton, and (c) of the foolish virgins, (d) are acknowledged to be borrowed from the writings of their Rabbins.

† There are three other opinions which have their followers among the ancients. One is mentioned by the author of the questions that go under the name of Justin Martyr, viz. That the Baptist was not in the least doubtful whether Jesus was the true Messiah, but only was desirous to know, whether he, of whom he had heard so many wonderful things, (whilst under confinement, and unable to satisfy himself) was the same person of whom he had given testimony, and declared to be the Messiah. Others think, that the meaning of the question was, "Whether Jesus should die for the redemption of mankind?" But surely he, who long before had styled him the "Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world," John i. 29. with allusion, no doubt, to the sacrifices slain under the Jewish law, gave sufficient intimation, that he was not ignorant of this great truth. Others again imagine, that the sense of this enquiry is,—Whether Jesus should come to the Hades, or place of souls departed, (whither the Baptist foreknew that himself was shortly to go) and whether he should preach his coming, and be his forerunner there, in the like manner as he had been upon earth? But this is an imagination too extravagant to receive any countenance from the present, whatever it might meet with in former ages. [Of these three opinions the most rational certainly is that of Justin Martyr. It is, I think, more rational than that, which our author prefers, and therefore probably the true reason of the Baptist's message.] *Calmet's Commentary, Whitby's Annotations, and Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. i.*

(a) *Whitby's Annotations on Matth. xiii.*

* The Jews, above all nations, delighted in this way of reasoning. Their books at this day are full of such parables as our Saviour used, and are generally introduced in a form of speech not unlike his; "whereunto shall I liken such or such a thing? nay, in the Talmudical Treatises, such as the Treatise Killaim, there is a dispute of sowing upon the rocks and stones, and of mixing wheat and tares together; and in Peah, (a tract in the Jerusalem Talmud) there is mention made of a tree of mustard-seed, which one might climb up into, like other trees. So that our Saviour was by no means to blame, but rather highly to be commended, for pursuing this parabolical way of teaching morality, which was the most celebrated method among the Jews. For his farther vindication, however, some have observed, that what our Saviour delivered in this manner, did not contain the fundamental precepts and doctrines of the Gospel (for these were taught with sufficient clearness in the vii, viii, and ix chapters of St Matthew), but only the mysteries relating to the progress of the Gospel, and the event of it among Jews and Gentiles; and the Jews themselves acknowledged, that the predictions of this nature were usually taught in allegorical and emblematical expressions, being not so necessary to be known as were the fundamental rules of faith and manners. *Lightfoot's Harmony of the New Testament, page 30, Nichols's Conference, part iii. page 413, and Whitby's Annotations on Matth. xiii. 10.*

(b) Luke xvi. 19.

(c) Matthew xxv. 1.

(d) *Sheringham, Præf.*

The truth is, (a) the eastern way of reasoning was so different from that of the west, that the soundest philosophy of Greece or Rome would have been mere jargon and cant at Jerusalem ‡. The only method of reasoning, which was agreeable to the Jewish taste, was to usher in an handsome simile or story apposite to the matter in hand; to apply a smart saying of some ancient worthy; or to bring good proof from their law or ancient tradition; but to go to prove morality to them (as Plato or Tully do) from the eternal rules of justice, from the rectitude and honourableness of virtue, and the pravity and turpitude of vice, would have been such a way of talking as the wisest men of their way of education would have greatly despised; and therefore our Blessed Saviour (who was well acquainted with the temper and customs of the people with whom he conversed) took care that his way of instructing them should be such as was most agreeable to their education, and consequently such as would tend more to their edification than if he had introduced the philosophic method of morality, which was only in use in such nations as were destitute of the benefits of a Divine Revelation.

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

The heathens indeed couched their religious mysteries under fables and allegories, out of a principle both of fear and policy, to conceal them from the contempt of the vulgar, and to excite the study and curiosity of the learned: But in this latter design they seem to be mistaken, because the learned could no sooner look into the matters hid under these fables, but they must have discovered their shame, absurdity, and ridiculousness. The design of our Lord's speaking to the people in parables was quite contrary to this, as himself declares, viz. (b) "because they seeing, see not, and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand;" which words, * both in sacred and profane authors, are a proverbial expression concerning men so wicked and so slothful, that either they attend not to, or will not follow the clearest intimations and convictions of their duty; and therefore, to awaken their attention, and make the stronger impression upon them, our Saviour was forced to have recourse to parables.

This passage indeed, in the other evangelists that mention it, seems to bear a different sense, (c) "unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables, that seeing they may see, and not perceive, and hearing they may hear, and not understand:" Or, as it is in St Luke, (d) "that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand:" As if our Lord had spoken to the multitudes in parables, i. e. in a plain and familiar way, on purpose that they might not understand him, which, besides the contradiction, seems to include a spice of malevolence, where there never was any. (e) But all this is occasioned by the mistake of our translators, who, both in St Mark and St Luke, have rendered the word *ὅρα*, by *that*, which should have been *because*; for this gives the words a quite different turn: In St Mark, "because seeing they do see, and not perceive," and in St Luke, "because seeing they see not, and hearing they understand not." The natural import of which is this,—“That the Jews, by reason of their prejudices, not being able to understand the great mysteries of the Gospel, our Sa-

(a) Nichols's Conference, part iii. page 413.

‡ [Certainly neither *cant* nor *jargon* in the sense in which these words are generally used, but by much too abstract to arrest their attention.]

(b) Matth. xiii. 13.

* To this purpose the prophet Jeremiah, "to a revolting and rebellious people, which had cast off the fear of God," speaks in this wise: "Hear now this, ye foolish people, and without understanding, which have eyes and see not, which have ears and hear not," chap. v. 21. and in like manner God speaks to Ezekiel: "Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a

rebellious house, which have eyes to see and see not; that have ears to hear and hear not, for they are a rebellious house," chap. xii. 2. Philo uses the phrase in the same signification; for speaking of those that were addicted to wine and sensual pleasures, he says, *ὁρῶντες, οὐκ ὁρῶσι, καὶ ἀκούοντες, οὐκ ἀκούουσιν*. "They seeing, see not, and hearing, do not hear; and Demosthenes mentions it as a common proverb, *ὁρῶντας, μὴ ὁρᾶν, καὶ ἀκούοντας, μὴ ἀκούειν*. Whitby's Annotations on Matth. xiii.

(c) Mark iv. 11, 12. (d) Chap. viii. 10.

(e) Howell's History in the Notes.

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&c. or 5440.
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Vulg. *Ær.* 29.

viour, out of love to their souls, accommodated himself to their capacities, by speaking to them in parables, i. e. in metaphors and similitudes, borrowed from things temporal and corporeal, in order to bring them to a more competent understanding of his doctrine."

(a) "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but not to them," does not therefore imply, that our Saviour's parables were dark and obscure, and that, by speaking to the people in this manner, he had a design to conceal any truth that was requisite for them to know; but only, that he made a fuller discovery of his doctrine to his disciples, than it was necessary at that time to make to the multitude; that he instructed them in private, and enlarged upon the sense of his parables, and let them into the knowledge of several things that were not yet proper to be communicated to all, because they were his peculiar friends, and his constant companions; were more disposed to receive his doctrine; were afterwards to be the preachers of it; and, at length, to seal the truth of it with their blood.

They were honest and well designing men; but it would be doing too great a compliment to their understanding to say, that there was any thing extraordinary, until they were endued from above in their sagacity and penetration: And therefore we are not to impute it to the obscurity of our Saviour's parables, that we find his disciples so frequently at a loss for the meaning of them (since some of them were quoted from Jewish authors, and many of them taken from the most obvious and common things), but we should rather impute it to their natural dulness and want of apprehension, as we find our Saviour himself does, when, upon their requesting him to expound the plain parable of the sower, he could not forbear saying with admiration, (b) "Know ye not this parable, and how then shall ye know all parables?"

It was not, then, to cloud and obscure, but rather illustrate and enforce his meaning, that our Lord delivered himself so frequently in parables; and the reason why he refused to gratify the Pharisees, in their desire of a sign from heaven, was, because he had already done miracles enough to satisfy them, had not their obstinacy been proof against all conviction. In that very chapter (c) wherein they make this insolent demand, they had seen before their faces (d) a withered hand made whole, and, (e) upon the ejection of a devil, a blind and dumb man restored to his sight and speech: but observe the turn which their resolute infidelity gives to the miracles; (f) "This fellow does not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils:" And yet these very men have the modesty, in a few verses after, to come to the person they had just before reviled and blasphemed at this rate, with this arrogant demand, (g) "Master, we would see a sign from thee." After such an affront, would it have become the meekest man upon earth to gratify these men in any request whatever? But much more, would it have become the majesty of the Son of God to prostitute his Divine power, merely to satisfy the curiosity (for that was all they wanted to have satisfied) of such abandoned miscreants?

The sign which they wanted to see, may be supposed to be, either such (h) a shower of manna, as Moses; or such (i) a clap of thunder, as Samuel; or (k) such a fall of fire, as Elijah; or (l) such an arrest of the sun, as Joshua once called for. Now, supposing that our Saviour had been flexible enough to humour them in their unreasonable request, (m) what grounds have we to think, that these aerial or celestial prodigies would have wrought in them any more conviction than those miracles which were incontestable, done in their presence, within their feeling, and compass of examination? These,

(a) Matth. xiii. 11. (b) Mark iv. 13. (c) Matth. xii. 38. (d) Ver. 13.
(e) Ver. 22. (f) Ver. 24. (g) Ver. 38. (h) Exod. xvi. 14. (i) 1 Sam.
vii. 10. (k) 1 Kings xviii. 38. (l) Josh. x. 12. (m) Calmet's Commentary
on Matth. xii. 38.

we see, they imputed to a diabolical power, and much more might they do it to those that were at so vast a distance, since they could not be ignorant of what is said of the "prince of the power of the air," in the book of Job, viz. That the "fire which fell from heaven," and consumed that holy man's substance, as well as the wind which overturned the house, where his children were met together, were the effects of Satan's procuring.

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

What notions the ancient Jews had of the power of magic we cannot positively say; but it is certain, that the heathen magicians made it their boast, * that they could stop the course of the sun, moon, and stars, turn them into darkness as they pleased, and make them obey their voice: And if the Pharisees had the like notions of these things, their demanding a sign from heaven was to no manner of purpose, because, upon their own supposition, that our Lord acted by a magical power, what they desired him to do was not above the sphere of his ability; and if they thought it so, it could never have wrought in them any good conviction, because the same hardness of heart, and hatred of him, would have kept them under the same persuasion still, that all his wonders, whether above or below, whether in heaven or on earth, whether on human or celestial bodies, were done by the assistance of the devil.

Since then no sign that the Pharisees could ask, even had our Saviour condescended to work it, would have been effectual to their conviction, our Saviour was not unkind in remitting them to one that would not fail of convincing them, that what he did was not by a diabolical but Divine power. For, since it was agreed on all hands, that a person, when dead, whatever he had in his lifetime, could not then have the devil at his command; if, after they had crucified him, they should find him restored to life again, this would be a sign wherein there could be no fallacy; that as his restoration was from the hand of God, so his commission had all along been from the same; and (a) that, as Jonas's miraculous escape from the whale's belly, wherewith the Ninevites were doubtless acquainted, was a powerful means to confirm to them the truth of his prophetic office; so now, though all Christ's miracles, while living, prevailed but little, yet after his death and resurrection from the grave, he would then be credited in the same manner as Jonas was; (b) "he would then draw all men after him," and the very Pharisees themselves would be prevailed upon to acknowledge his Divine mission. This is the sense of his comparing himself so often with the prophet Jonas: and that the chief priests and Pharisees understood the comparison in this sense, is manifest from what they say to Pilate; (c) "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, after three days I will rise again;" for I nowhere remember, that he made any declaration to the chief priests and Pharisees, though he did it frequently to his apostles, of his intended resurrection after three days, but only in this comparison of himself to Jonas.

Had human wisdom indeed been consulted in the election of Christ's apostles, it would have made choice of the profoundest Rabbins, the acutest philosophers, and the most powerful orators, who, by the strength of reason, and arts of eloquence, might have triumphed over the minds of men, grappled with the stubbornness of the Jews, and baffled the fine notions and speculations of the Greeks and Romans; but then it must be allowed, that one argument for the proof of the divinity of the Christian religion had been lost. Nay, it might have been objected, "That no wonder, indeed, that this religion should thrive so well in the world, when it had all human advantages to assist it, and was supported and carried on by the united force of the reason and eloquence of such renowned scholars." But now, by making choice of weak and illiterate persons to be his apostles, and first publishers of the Gospel, our Lord has taken an effect-

* Quæ sidera excantata voce Thessalâ
Lunamque cælo deripit. Hor. in Canidiam

(a) Whitby's Annotations on Matth. xii. 39.
(b) John xii. 32. (c) Matth. xxvii. 63.

A. M. 4035,
&c. or 5440.
Ann. Dom.
31, &c.
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tual means that (a) "our faith should not stand (as St Paul expresses it) in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God, because their speech and their preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

And indeed, what less than a Divine power could have enabled a few illiterate mechanics, who had no art, no address of their own, to propagate a new and unheard-of religion, contrary to the laws everywhere established, and contrary to mens natural passions and appetites, with such a wonderful success, as, in the space of twenty or thirty years, to extend it over all the principal parts of the Roman empire, and in the next age to fill all places, cities and islands, castles and burghs, palaces and senates, courts and camps, with multitudes of converts, as the great apologist Tertullian justly glories? Doubtless, if ever there was an intervention of Divine power in human affairs it was here, "when (b) God chose the foolish and weak things of the world to confound the wise and mighty," and when simplicity and ignorance not only had the advantage, but absolutely triumphed over all the wit, and learning, and power, and policy of the world.

That therefore the mighty force of Christianity, to make its way through the greatest obstacles, might more evidently appear the instruments which our Saviour employed in the propagation of it (so far as their own abilities, either natural or acquired, were concerned) were the meanest that can be imagined, but, by an extraordinary communication of his Blessed Spirit to them, he inspired them with the gift of languages, that they might be able to address themselves to people of all nations; with the power of working miracles, that they might be able to confirm the truth of the doctrine which they taught; and, upon all emergencies, (c) "with such a mouth and wisdom, as all their adversaries were not able to gainsay or resist."

These, and several other gifts extraordinary, did more than supply the natural defects which the apostles laboured under in the execution of so great a work; but now that these gifts are withdrawn, our religion established, and the canon of the Holy Scriptures completed, their successors have a different province to manage. Instead of travelling all the world over, and compassing sea and land to gain proselytes to the Christian faith, their duty is, to keep in order the things that are settled, and (d) "to feed the flock of God, that is among them, taking the oversight thereof, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; not as lords over God's inheritance, but as ensamples to their flock;" and, instead of delivering to their respective churches such writings as might in all ages be the pillar and foundation of truth, their business is to study the Scriptures, which they have received, to defend their authority, and expound their sense: (e) "to preach the word; (as the apostle to Timothy specifies their office) to be instant in season and out of season; to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine;" and what compass of learning, and share of influence among the people, are requisite to a due discharge of all this (as (f) "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of God"), wants no detail of arguments to prove, since we find the great apostle St Paul, amidst all the gifts that were then dispensed to the church, and the particular revelations which were vouchsafed him, upon the consideration of the weightiness of his office, crying out, and saying, (g) "who is sufficient for these things?" Upon the whole, therefore, we may observe, that it was highly requisite, that the apostles, and first publishers of the Gospel, and the present ministers and preachers of it, should be men of different characters and abilities; that the former of these (for the more effectual discharge of their office) should have several kinds of gifts supernatural, the latter no more than was the product of their own

(a) 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.
(e) 2 Tim. iv. 2.

(b) Ibid. i. 27,
(f) Ibid. ii. 15.

(c) Luke xxi. 15.
(g) 2 Cor. ii. 16.

(d) 1 Pet. v. 2.

labour and acquisition; or (to speak in the phrase of the Scripture) that, as at first our Saviour (a) "gave some apostles, some prophets, and some evangelists; so now he should appoint some rulers, some pastors, and some teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*.

From Matth. xiii. 1. Mark ii. 23 Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

(b) That anger, considered in itself, and upon all occasions whatever, is unlawful, neither the most rigid philosophers, nor the most severe Christians, have ever been able to prove. It is one of those passions that are implanted in us by the God of nature. The first motions of it seem to be mechanical, and the hastiness or slowness of it depends in a great measure upon the temper of the body and the animal spirits: so far then as it is natural, we dare not account it criminal, for fear of making God, who hath implanted it in us, the author of sin. Those who define it a desire of revenge, or of doing evil to another; purely because he has done so to us, make it indeed a sinful passion, and a plain violation of that command, which requires us (c) "not to avenge ourselves, but rather to give place unto wrath;" but if it be considered (d) as proceeding upon a desire of obtaining satisfaction for some injury done to us, or to those for whom we are concerned, the honour of God, the reverence due to the laws, the love of virtue, and the protection of good men, may make this not only innocent but highly necessary and commendable. There is a tameness of spirit that justly deserves censure; and in some cases we even do not well unless we are angry: And for this reason, I make no doubt, it was, (e) that our blessed Saviour, on some occasions, suffered himself to be seen in some degrees of this passion, namely, to evince the lawfulness of it, and, by his example, to confute the doctrine of those heathen stoics, who condemned the use of all passions, and were for making those natural tendencies which God has given us altogether superfluous.

For religion admits of no such paradoxical notions: When it requires us to be (f) slow to wrath, it allows of the passion upon a just provocation, and only blames him (g) "who is angry with his brother without a cause;" and when it gives us this caution, (h) "Be angry and sin not, let not the sun go down upon your wrath," it supposes the thing itself warrantable, and only prohibits the excess or long duration of it. It is the rash, causeless, and continued anger, that our holy religion condemns: But who shall say that our Saviour's resentment to the Pharisees was not upon good grounds, when they, by their traditions, had made void the moral law, excused men from doing what God had commanded, and laid upon them other unnecessary burdens, which he had nowhere enjoined? When the pride and arrogance of their sect, and their contempt and hatred of all that contradicted them, made it necessary for him to use some smartness in his reprehensions, thereby to excite them to a sensibility of their errors? They (i) had consulted with the Herodians how they might destroy him; the works which he did by the finger of God, they had ascribed to a diabolical power; and therefore no wonder "that he should look upon them with indignation, because of the hardness of their hearts." But when there was no such cause for any degree of anger, and where the glory of God was not immediately concerned, his whole life was the most perfect pattern of meekness and patience, according to that prediction concerning him, (k) "He

(a) Eph. iv. 11, &c.

* [To such as suppose, that, because the apostles and first preachers of the Gospel were chosen from among men comparatively illiterate, learning is not necessary to the clergy now, I beg leave to recommend an attentive perusal of Bishop Horsley's fourteenth sermon (Sermons, vol. 1st, first ed.), where they will find it completely proved, that before the apostles entered, or were permitted to enter, on their

work, they were miraculously made profound philosophers.]

(b) *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospel, vol. iii.

(c) Rom. xii. 19.

(d) *Whitby's* Annotations on Matth. v. 22.

(e) *Nicholl's* Conference, part. iii. p. 410.

(f) James i. 19. (g) Matth. v. 22.

(h) Eph. iv. 26. (i) Mark iii. 6.

(k) Isaiah xlii. 2, 3.

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shall not cry nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets; a bruised reed shall he not break, and a smoking flax shall he not quench."

But how comes it then that St Mark, in his Gospel, represents our Saviour as a person that was supposed (a) to be beside himself? Various are the significations which are given to the word ἐκέστη in this place; but there are three that bid fairest for the solution of that difficulty (b) In the preceding verse it is said, that the multitude came so fast upon him, that he had not time to take any food to recruit his spirits; and thereupon some interpreters would have the word signify his fainting through hunger, or being in danger of falling into a deliquium by spending his spirits, and taking no manner of refreshment to revive them. (c) Others had rather mean by the word such an ecstasy, or transport of mind, as those who are moved with a vehement zeal or prophetic spirit are wont to be affected with, and, consequently, that his friends apprehensions were, that in the execution of his prophetic office, i. e. in his preaching and instructing the people, he expended his strength too much, forgetful of that care and preservation which he ought to have had of himself. But, for my part, I cannot see why the word may not here be taken in its common and ordinary sense, for what is called madness and distraction. We acknowledge indeed, that our Lord, neither in his actions nor in his gestures, shewed ever any symptoms of a disordered mind, nor could his relations, from any behaviour of his, conceive any such thing of him; but then the words in the text ἔλεγον γάρ, "for they said," may not relate to his friends, but to other people who had raised this report of him. The Pharisees had given out that he had a devil, and did all these miracles by a confederacy with him; and others, who did not run to this length of blasphemy, said, nevertheless, that he was mad, and his head turned; and when this came to his friends ears, they, out of a charitable design perhaps, went to apprehend him, supposing that he might possibly be under some such disorder; and not rightly understanding the end of his mission, as the evangelist (d) informs us, that some of his kindred "did not believe in him." And indeed, (e) if we consider with ourselves, how common a thing it is to look upon those who think, or speak, or act in a manner different from other people, as fools and madmen; how this was the fate (f) of the young prophet before Jehu's companions, and of St Paul (g) before Festus; we shall not think it strange that our Lord should fall under the same opprobrious imputation, or that his relations, (who had no true conception of him or his office) hearing of this rumour, should endeavour to get him into their custody, and so prevent his exposing himself to the scorn and derision of those that hated him. For though some of the people were of opinion that "he spake as never man spake, (h) yet many of them said, he has a devil, and is mad, why hear ye him?"

The name of Peter, or Cephas, (as it is in the Syriac) our blessed Lord gave to Simon, when his brother Andrew first brought them together; and in allusion to this name it is, that he calls him the *rock* or *stone* upon which he intended to build his church. Some indeed by this rock think, that our Saviour intends himself, (i) and that in uttering these words, he pointed at his own person, as he seems to have done upon another like occasion, when he speaks to the Jews, (k) "destroy this temple, (meaning his own body) and in three days I will raise it up;" But the sense seems abstruse, and the transition abrupt, that our (l) Saviour, speaking to Peter, and calling him a rock, should, with the same breath, pass to himself, and yet not say, upon myself, but "upon this rock (and St Peter was the only rock he mentioned) will I build my church." Others therefore would rather have St Peter's faith and confession to be the rock here spoken of, as it must be acknowledged indeed, that in this confession of his, the sum and sub-

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| (a) Mark iii. 21. | (b) <i>Whitby</i> in locum. | (c) <i>Hammond's</i> Annotations. | (d) John vii. 5. |
| (e) <i>Calmet's</i> Commentary in locum. | (f) 2 Kings ix. 11. | (g) Acts xxvi. 24. | |
| (h) John x. 20. | (i) <i>Sianhope</i> on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv. | (k) John ii. 19. | |
| (l) <i>Pool's</i> Annotations on Matth. xvi. 18. | | | |

stance of the Christian doctrine is comprised; but then it should be considered, that as our Lord, without all doubt, meant to say something singular to St Peter, as a reward of his frank confession of him, if this confession was all the rock he intended, here was nothing particular said to the apostle, and yet, at the same time, the whole grace of the allusion to his name was entirely lost. It is reasonable therefore to think, (a) that as our Saviour here directs his speech, not to the whole college of the apostles, but to St Peter only, and seems to promise him something peculiar as the reward of his liberal confession, the sense of the expression should be, that he would, in a more eminent manner, make use of his ministry in laying the first foundation of the Christian church, both among the Jews and Gentiles; as we find he did the former, (b) in his most efficacious sermon at the day of Pentecost, and the latter (c) in the conversion of Cornelius and his company *.

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

There is a passage in Isaiah, which (as some imagine) helps us to the knowledge of what our Saviour means by the keys of the kingdom of heaven; it is, where God foretels Eliakim, (d) that he "will call him, and clothe him with the robe of Shebna, (who (e) was over the household) and strengthen him with his girdle, and commit his government into his hand, and lay the key of the house of David † upon his shoulder, &c." Now, because the key was an ensign of great honour and power, and what the chief stewards in princes palaces usually wore as an indication of their office, our Saviour makes use of this expression, to denote that authority and jurisdiction wherewith he invested the apostles, and their successors, in the administration of the affairs of his church. But besides the key of government, there is (f) the key of knowledge, which the scribes and Pharisees are blamed for having taking away; and therefore as the use of a key is to open a door or gate, we should rather think the import of Christ's promise here to Peter is, (g) that he should be the person who should first open the mysteries of the Gospel dispensation, both to Jew and Gentile; by the power of his preaching make the first converts among both; and by the rite of baptism receive such converts into the pale of the Christian church: and by the binding and loosing which follow, (though †² some are willing to extend them to the power of excommunication and absolution) I should rather be inclined to think, that, according to the language then in use among the Jews, our Saviour means the forbidding or permitting such and such things; that (h) he is here declaring his will, that his apostles should settle the affairs of his church by virtue of their infallible spirit; should determine what was lawful or

(a) *Whitby's* Annotations in locum.

(b) Acts ii. (c) *Ibid.* x.

* [See this argument illustrated in a most masterly manner in Bishop Horsley's thirteenth sermon.]

(d) Isa. xxii. 20. (e) *Ibid.* ver. 15.

† This custom of carrying keys upon mens shoulders may seem very strange to us; but the ancients had their keys made very large, and in the form of a sickle, and the weight and shape of them was such that they could no otherwise be carried conveniently but as we see our reapers carry their sickles. *Calmet's Dictionary* under the word *Key*.

(f) Luke xi. 52.

(g) *Whitby's* Annotations on Matth. xvi. 19.

†² This indeed is the common acceptation of the words; and our learned Archbishop Potter, in his Discourse of Church Government, chap. v. looks upon this binding and loosing, when applied to things and not persons, not only "as a manifest force upon the words, which the Scriptures never use in any such sense, but false in fact likewise, because the apostles had no power either to make or declare any thing to

be unlawful which was not before made and declared by Christ to be so:" And therefore, though he owns that in the text things and not persons are expressed, yet he nevertheless affirms, "that it is very common to put adjectives of the neuter gender instead of substantives, and so to express things when persons are understood." This manner of expressing substantives by neuter adjectives can hardly be contested; but then we cannot but think that the word binding, when put for imposing laws or injunctions upon us, is no uncommon phrase in Scripture, since we find our Saviour complaining of the scribes and Pharisees "for binding heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and laying them on other mens shoulders," Matth. xxiii. 4. Nor can we see how the apostles (who had no precept from their master to that purpose) could have absolved proselytes from the observation of the Jewish law, Acts xv. 28, 29. had they not had a power and authority given them by the Holy Ghost, to "declare some things which Christ had not declared before."

(h) *Pool's* Annotations on Matth. xvi. 18.

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unlawful for Christians to do, and that such their determinations should be ratified in heaven: "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, i. e. declare to be forbidden, shall expose the man that commits it to punishment; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, or declare to be lawful now, (though formerly forbidden) shall be allowed to be done without any one's incurring my displeasure." So that, in this sense, the words are a foundation of our faith and obedience to the doctrines and commands of the apostles, and of the cessation of the ritual precepts of the law of Moses.

According to this exposition, the sense of our Lord's promise to Peter (supposing it personal and directed to him only) will be this: (a) "Thy name signifies a rock, and suitable to that name shall be thy work and office; for upon thee, i. e. upon the strength of thy preaching, shall the foundation of my church be laid. Thee I will appoint to make the first converts, both of Jews and Gentiles, to my holy religion, and by the ordinance of baptism, to admit them into the communion of saints; and to thee I will give power to enact laws for the good government of my church; to determine what is proper or improper to be done, and to release my people from the observation of legal ceremonies."

This is the full force of our Saviour's speech to Peter; and yet it neither denotes nor implies any œcumenical pastoral power in him (much less in his successors) above the rest of the apostles. For if he be here called the rock or foundation-stone, the same honour is attributed to the rest, where it is said that (b) "we are built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." If he had the power of the keys intrusted with him, and thereby admitted the first converts, both Jews and Gentiles, into the Christian church, both James and John exercised the same office in converting those of the circumcision; and St Paul opened the kingdom of heaven to many more Gentiles than ever he did. If he had authority to discharge the converts he made, from the observation of the ceremonial law, St Paul, without doubt, had the same with regard to this, and perhaps a clearer notion of the Christian liberty than St Peter seems to have had, when he gave occasion to the other to (c) "withstand him to the face," and so frequently to declare, "that we are not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ:" and whatever the sense of binding and loosing may be, it is certain, that the same power and authority was given in as ample a manner to all the apostles in general, where it is said, (d) "whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven:" and again, (e) "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." So wisely did our Blessed Saviour settle an * equality among his apostles, that (f) "there

(a) *Whitby's Annotations.*

(c) Gal. ii. 11,—16.

(e) John xx. 23.

(b) Eph. ii. 20.

(d) Matth. xviii. 18.

* It is certain that the rest of the apostles did not conceive any peculiar power or pre-eminence to have been given to Peter, because, after this promise made to him, James and John desired to be next in dignity to our Lord, as also among them and the other apostles, there was a contention who should be greatest; which could not well have happened if they had understood that this honour had been already granted to Peter. It cannot be denied, indeed, but that some of the apostles were superior to others, both in personal merit and order of place. St Paul speaks of some, viz. James, Peter, and John, who seemed to be pillars, Gal. ii. 9. i. e. principal supporters of the church, and were accounted chief apostles, 2 Cor. xi. 5. and it is remarkable, that in all the catalogues of

the twelve apostles which are extant in the Scriptures, Peter is constantly placed the first, as Judas is the last: from whence we may observe, that as "Judas, who kept the bag and was a thief," John xii. 6. was last of all the twelve, so Peter, who had the first place, does all along, through the whole history of the Gospels, shew a greater zeal for our Lord's honour and service than any of the rest. Vid. p. 140 of this Book in the Notes. But whatever might be the true reason of this order, it is certain, that nothing more was founded on it than a mere priority of place, and that neither Peter nor any other apostle had any power or authority over the rest, according to that of St Cyprian, (*Lib. De unitate Eccles.*) "Hoc erant utique et cæteri Apostoli, quod fuit petrus, pari consortio præditi et honoris et potestatis." Archbishop *Potter's* Discourse of Church Government, chap. iii.

(f) Corinthians 12. 25.

might be no schism in his church, but that (a) in him all the building fitly framed together (as the apostle continues the metaphor) might grow unto an holy temple in the Lord !”

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

Nothing certainly can be plainer in Scripture, than that the sin against the Holy Ghost, which our Saviour mentions as a sin unpardonable, is to be understood of the Pharisees imputing the miracles which he wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost to the power of the devil ; and yet I know not how a great many learned men have made shift to mistake it. (b) A denial of Christ's Divinity, a denial of his religion for fear of suffering, a wilful opposition to the truth, a malicious envying other mens graces, gross relapses into sin, or final impenitence, and perseverance therein, have some by one, and some by others, been made the characteristics of this sin ; and yet the very occasion of our Saviour's discourse concerning it, cannot but give us quite different conceptions.

(c) He had just now healed one possessed of a devil, blind and dumb, whereat the people were much amazed, and began to say among themselves, “ Is not this the Son of David ? i. e. the promised Messiah : which when the Pharisees understood, they gave this vile and malicious turn to the miracle, “ This fellow does not cast out devils but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. This calumny our Saviour undertook to confute, by shewing how unlikely a thing it was, that the devil should lend him his power to use it against himself ; and then proceeds to discourse of this sin, (d) “ Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy (which is of another nature) shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto them.” The Pharisees therefore are the persons charged with the sin, and the sin is, their attributing what was done by the finger of God to a diabolical power.

(e) A learned annotator of our own is of opinion, that though our Saviour entered upon this discourse, because the Pharisees imputed his miracles to a confederacy with Satan, yet his chief design was, to deter his hearers from blaspheming the ensuing dispensation of the Holy Ghost, which, upon his resurrection and ascension, he had promised to send down from heaven : So that this sin against the Holy Ghost neither was, nor could be committed, when our Saviour spake these words, not until the time that its miraculous gifts were communicated to the apostles, which was on the day of Pentecost. But (besides that our Blessed Saviour had not as yet made mention either of his own ascension, or of the mission of the Holy Ghost) since the power, whereby both he and his apostles wrought their miracles, proceeded from the same Divine Spirit, a reviling of this power, when our Saviour did the miracle, must be blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, as much as it was when his apostles did it ; and so the difference amounts to nothing.

(f) Our Blessed Lord indeed, to shew that he was sent from God, wrought miracles, such as did plainly evince a Divine power and presence accompanying him. These miracles (to which he frequently appeals) the Pharisees were eye-witnesses of, and therefore could not deny them ; yet such was their hatred and opposition to him and his doctrine, that, rather than allow his Divine mission, they were resolved to ascribe all he did to the power of the devil. Their design in this was to destroy the whole credit of Christianity, and, by making him a confederate with Satan, to represent his religion as the work and contrivance of hell, and such only as would tend to the mischief and destruction of mankind. To slander and calumniate the Son of Man was a great sin, no doubt, but such as might more easily be forgiven them, because of his state of humiliation and poor appearance, which might occasion their disesteem : But to represent the Spirit of God as an apostate angel, and whatever he did for the good and salvation of

(a) Eph. ii. 21. (b) Tillotson's Sermons, vol. i. (c) Matth. xii. 22. (d) Ibid. ver. 31.
(e) Whitby in his Appendix to the xiiith chapter of St Matthew. (f) Tillotson's Sermons, vol. i.

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mankind, as the work and intrigue of the devil, is a sin of such horrid nature, as may well deserve a particular exemption from the general promise and covenant of pardon.

(a) God, no doubt, can, if he will, work so powerfully upon the minds of men by his grace and spirit, as to convince the most obstinate; and, supposing them to be convinced, and repent, it cannot be denied but that they would be forgiven: And therefore, when our Saviour says, that such "as blaspheme against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven," it is reasonable to suppose, that he means, that when men are come to such a degree of inveterate malice, God (as he justly may) will withdraw his grace from them, and leave them to the bent of their perverse minds, which will insensibly engage them in a farther opposition to the truth, and sink them finally into perdition; so that being deserted of God, and, for want of the necessary aid of his grace, continuing finally impenitent, they become incapable of forgiveness, "both in this world and in that which is to come." The short then of all this is, that the sin against the Holy Ghost is unpardonable, not because there is not a sufficiency of merit in Christ to atone for it, or of mercy in God the Father to forgive it, but because those who commit it are of such a refractory and incorrigible spirit, that they resist the last and utmost means of their conviction, and, consequently, neither will nor can repent; especially if God in judgment (as it sometimes happens), and (b) "because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, should send upon them a strong delusion that they might believe a lie."

That which has made some passages in the vith chapter of St John's Gospel, and especially the command of (c) "eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of the Son of man," a matter of so much perplexity, is the want of attending to the occasion of his discourse, and the figurative forms of expression that were then in use in the eastern nations. Our Lord, it seems, but the day before, (d) had fed a great number of people with a very small matter of provisions. The day following they resort to him in hopes of the same bounteous supply. Our Lord, who knew their design, rebuked their greedy appetite. They, in return, reminded him of Moses's liberality (much superior to his), in providing them manna for the space of forty years. Hereupon our Lord took occasion to acquaint them, (e) "that he was the bread of God which came down from heaven," highly preferable to manna; forasmuch as that gave only their forefathers a transitory, but this an everlasting life to the whole world: For (f) "he that cometh to me (continues he) shall never hunger; and he that believeth in me shall never thirst;" and again, (g) "I am the living (or rather life-giving) bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give him is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world: (h) For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

Now, whosoever considers the genius of the eastern languages, abounding in lofty, and sometimes abstruse figures, and how common a thing it was, among the Jews especially, to use the metaphors of eating and drinking in a spiritual sense, viz. to denote the exercise or improvement of any of the intellective faculties of the soul, will not be much surprised at our Saviour's expressing himself in this manner. (i) "Ho, every one that thirsteth (says the prophet, exhorting the people to hear his instructions), come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk, without money, and without price; and eat ye that, which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." To the same purpose we frequently find Philo calling wisdom and virtue the food of the soul, which nourishes it to eternal life; and (k) the Talmudists telling us, that "all the eating and drinking which is mentioned in the

(a) Tillotson's Sermons, vol. i. (b) 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11. (c) John vi. 53.
(d) Ibid. ver. 9, 10. (e) Ibid. ver. 33. (f) Ibid. ver. 35. (g) Ibid. ver. 51.
(h) Ibid. ver. 54, 55. (i) Isaiah lv. 1, 2. (k) Maimon. More Nev. lib. i. c. 10.

book of Ecclesiastes, relates to the observation of the law and good works: Nay, manna, in particular (according to the sense of some Jewish authors) was an eminent type of Christ; and therefore, "the good man, (a) says Philo, lifts up his eyes to heaven, looking to the manna, the Divine and heavenly *ἀλγος*, the incorruptible food of the soul, that loves God;" and if this was the Jews sense of things, our Saviour was guilty of no presumption in styling himself the "true bread which came down from heaven," nor of any absurdity, in insisting upon a metaphor which so frequently occurred in the best of their authors. The only question is, whether our Saviour's words in this place are to be taken in a literal or metaphorical sense, i. e. whether they relate to a corporeal or spiritual eating his flesh?

From Matth. xiii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

There is something so shocking in the very notion of one man's eating the flesh of another, that when the Jews heard our Saviour (as they imagined) discourse at this rate, they might well say, (b) "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (c) "Will he cut it in pieces, and distribute to every one of us a share? It is no agreeable thought to eat human flesh, but (supposing we could bring ourselves to that) how could he multiply himself into so many parts as that each of us might have one? Or how could himself subsist, if he should, in this barbarous and inhuman manner, cut and mangle his own body?" This seems to be the reasoning of the Jews upon the case: (d) But on all hands it is agreed that they mistook the sense of our Saviour's words, and fancied such a meaning in them as he never intended; whereas, had the literal sense been the proper and intended meaning, it is certain that they imposed no false construction upon what he said; since, upon this supposition, he intended that his human flesh should properly be eaten, and they, in their questioning the truth of what he said, meant no more.

We may observe farther, that when our Saviour knew within himself that the abstruseness of his discourse upon this subject had given some disgust to his disciples, (e) "he said unto them, does this offend you? What, and if ye should see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before? The only sense of which words can be, (f) Are you offended that I thus speak of giving you my flesh to eat? Do you look on this expression now as a thing so very absurd and unintelligible? What then will you think of it, when this body is removed hence into heaven? i. e. How will you then be scared, and think it still more difficult and more impossible to apprehend, how ye shall then eat my flesh and drink my blood, provided ye go on to understand my words in a gross and carnal manner?" For St Athanasius has well observed, that our Saviour here mentions his ascent into heaven, that he might divert his disciples from entertaining a carnal sense of his words: And therefore his argument is,—“Since it will be then impossible for you to eat my flesh corporeally, when it is so far removed from you; by this you may perceive that my purpose is, that you should understand my words in a spiritual sense.”

We may observe again, that when several disciples revolted upon the account of this hard saying, as (g) it is called, and our Saviour was apprehensive that his apostles might do the like, St Peter, in the name of the rest, answers him, (h) "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life:" Whereas, had he understood our Saviour as speaking here of oral manducation, his answer, very probably, would have been to this effect: "Whatsoever appearance there may be of inhumanity, absurdness, and impossibility in eating thy natural flesh and drinking thy blood, yet we believe it, because thou hast said it, who art Truth itself, and able to make good thy words." But since we hear nothing from him of this tendency, we may reasonably conclude that he had

(a) *L. de eo, quod deterius.* pag. 187.

(d) *Whitby's Annotations in locum*

(g) John vi. 60.

(b) John vi. 52.

(e) John vi. 61, 62.

(c) *Calmet's Comment. in locum.*

(f) *Whitby's Annotations,*

(h) *Ibid. ver. 68.*

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no such notion of our Saviour's words. And indeed our Saviour, one would think, had done enough to explain his own meaning, when he tells us that the eating, which he intends, is (a) "believing on him," and that it was such an eating as would make a man (b) "live for ever;" that (c) "flesh (if we could eat it) profiteth nothing," since the soul can only be nourished by spiritual food; and that therefore "the words which he spake unto them were spirit," i. e. were to be understood in a spiritual sense, otherwise they would not be conducive to eternal life: And therefore (d) Eusebius introduces our Saviour as thus addressing his disciples, "Do not think that I speak of that flesh where-with I am compassed, as if you must eat of that; neither imagine that I command you to drink my bodily blood, but understand well that the words which I have spoken unto you, 'they are spirit and life.'" For (as St Austin (e) lays down the rule for the exposition of Scripture phrases) "If the saying be preceptive, either forbidding a wicked action, or injoining a good one, it is no figurative speech; but if it seems to command any wickedness, or to forbid what is profitable and good, it is figurative. Accordingly this saying, 'except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood,' seems to command a wicked thing, and is therefore a figure, injoining us to communicate in the passion of our Lord, and sweetly and profitably remember that his flesh was wounded and crucified for us." (f) In this sense his flesh and blood are *ἀληθινός*, *truly meat and drink*; because the eating of this flesh by faith in his salutary passion doth nourish the soul to life eternal; and the drinking of his blood by faith, as that which was shed for the remission of sins, does refresh the person thirsting after righteousness, and convey into him a principle of living well, and of living for ever*.

Thus we have gone through the several objections that are usually made to the facts contained in the evangelical history of this period; and (if it would be of any farther satisfaction to those that delight to make them) we might shew, that whatever is recorded of our Blessed Saviour, the like, in one instance or other, the heathens themselves have acknowledged in their deified heroes and great men: (g) That the same power of curing all kinds of diseases the Greeks ascribe to their Æsculapius, and the Egyptians to their Serapis and Isis: That Hadrian (according (h) to Spartianus) was cured of a fever by the touch of a certain blind man: That Sesostrius, king of Egypt, upon offering a sacrifice to the god Mnevis, was restored to his eye-sight: That Vespasian (if we may believe Tacitus) cured a man of his lameness and another of his blindness, by anointing his eyes with spittle, in the manner that our Saviour did; and that Apol-

(a) John vi. 47. (b) Ibid. ver. 51.

(c) Ibid. ver. 63.

(d) *De Eccles. Theolog.* lib. iii. c. 12.

(e) *De Doctrin. Christian.* lib. iii. c. 16.

(f) *Whitby's Annotations* on John vi. 55.

* [Without controverting any part of our author's interpretation of what is said in the sixth chapter of the Gospel by St John, of *eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man*, it is proper to observe, that all the primitive writers of the church, long before the monstrous fiction of transubstantiation was heard of, considered these words as referring particularly to the communion of the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. They have been understood in the same way by some of the most eminent divines of the reformed church of England; and that interpretation is founded on a doctrine plainly taught by St Paul—that the Lord's supper is a religious feast on the sacrifice once offered for the sins of the whole world. Every one knows, that of the ancient sacrifices, part was offer-

ed to God, and part eaten as a religious feast by those for whom they were offered; and in conformity with this practice, our Lord, who came not to destroy the law but to fulfil it, appointed the elements of bread and wine to supply the place of his flesh and blood in the feast on the sacrifice which he was to offer for the sins of the world. He did not change them into his very flesh and blood, which we may safely say even he could not have done; but he made them answer all the purposes, which could have been answered by his flesh and blood in the feast on his one all-sufficient sacrifice. He called them therefore his flesh and blood, for much the same reason that a bank-bill, without being transubstantiated from paper into silver or gold, is called by the name of the piece of coin for which it passes current. See *Johnson's Unbloody Sacrifice*, &c. *Warburton's Rational Account* of the Lord's Supper, and Bishop *Cleaver's Sermons* on John vi.]

(g) *Huetii Quæst.* 18. *Alnet.* lib. ii.

(h) *Ælius Spartian.* Hadrian. c. 25.

Ionius Tyanæus (whom (a) Philostratus sets up as a powerful rival of our Lord's miracles) cured a young man that was possessed with a devil; and when he had restored him to his right senses, received him into the number of his disciples. Simplicius, in his Dissertations upon Epictetus, seems to promise to all pious and wise men the power of calming the waves of the sea; and how Neptune rebuked and allayed the winds, which, without his permission, had raised a tempestuous storm, is a story well known and well set off in (b) Virgil. Every poet almost mentions this same Neptune's riding in his chariot on the surface of the sea; and the tradition is, that to his son Euphemus and his nephew Orion he gave the faculty of walking upon it without fear of sinking. Nothing can be more common among the fictions of these writers than the transfiguration of their gods upon one occasion or other; and that our Saviour's method of electing his disciples might not want a precedent in profane history, (c) we are told that the famous Eastern philosopher Confucius, out of the three thousand followers that he had, made choice of seventy-two of principal note, and out of these of twelve only to be his more immediate companions, and to whom he committed the hidden mysteries of his philosophy: But our happiness is, that the credibility of the Scripture history wants no such weak supports as these; [and it is well that they do not, for these tales bear no resemblance to it. They were not recorded by contemporary authors in works committed to a select society, instituted for the express purpose of preserving these records uncorrupt, and disseminating them through the whole world.]

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

DISSERTATION II.

OF THE PROPHECIES RELATING TO THE MESSIAH, AND THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENT IN OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR.

ONE great evidence of our Saviour's divine mission, and consequently of the truth of his religion, is the completion of the ancient prophecies, relating to the Messiah, in his person, doctrine, and miracles. He indeed makes more frequent appeal to his miracles; (d) "The works which the Father hath given me to finish," says he, "the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me:" but since, at the same time, he lays claim to the character of being the person spoken of by Moses and the prophets, when he bids the people (e) "search the Scriptures, because they testified of him;" it is certain, that his title to the Messiahship must be tried by the testimony of the prophets, and that all the miraculous works which he did, will not prove him to be the messenger of the covenant, whom God was to send, unless the several predictions which his servants the prophets gave of that renowned person are found to unite and agree in him. It can hardly be thought, but that God Almighty, who designed such an inestimable benefit for mankind, as the sending of his own Son into the world for the redemption of it, should give some previous notice of his coming, and draw his picture, as it were, so much to the life and likeness, that when the original should be brought to view, it might be known and distinguished by it. It is acknowledged, I think, on all hands, that the prophets, "at sundry times, and in divers manners," have

(a) *Philost. Vit. Apoll. lib. iv. c. 6.*
(d) John v. 36.

(b) *Æneid i.*
(e) *Ibid. verse 39.*

(c) *Martin, Hist. Sinica, lib. iv.*

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done this; (*a*) that each of them in his turn has drawn a feature, if I may so say, and left some masterly stroke behind him of this great personage that was to come from heaven; that one has described his parentage, another the time, another the place, and another the uncommon manner of his birth; that some have taken notice of the most remarkable actions and events of his life, and several of the most minute and altogether singular circumstances of his death; that by some his resurrection is foretold, by others his ascent to the throne of God, and by others the perpetual duration of his kingdom: and, if the prophets are allowed to have done this, our only enquiry is, whether the lineaments which they in their several capacities have drawn of the promised Messiah, when all brought together, be answerable to the account which the evangelists have given us in their history of the Blessed Jesus.

We readily own, indeed, that there is a great obscurity in the ancient prophecies. They are generally penned in a very exalted style, and abound with so many bold metaphors, and hyperbolical expressions, so many allegories and parables, and other abstruse forms of speech, as make it very difficult for the interpreters of Scripture to discover their true scope or meaning. The prophecies relating to the Messiah are still more obscure, because, as they consider him in the different capacities of his humiliation and exaltation, unless this distinction is taken along with us, when we apply them to one and the same person, they will seem to load his character with contradictions. But still, since it is acknowledged that the great design of prophecy was to acquaint the world with the Messiah, and that, upon whatever particular occasions God sent his messengers, he always made this one part of their errand, we can hardly believe that he would multiply these messages to no purpose; or, when he pretended to reveal this matter to them, mock them with unintelligible words, and leave them as much in the dark as he found them. He might indeed, for wise purposes, (*b*) “multiply visions, and use similitudes and (*c*) dark speeches, by the ministry of the prophets;” but in this grand discovery of all, he certainly left such indications as enabled those who “looked for the redemption of Israel,” and accordingly made it their business to search the Scriptures, and enquire into the marks of the Messiah, to attain a competent knowledge of them: Nor can it well be doubted but that the Jews had some fixed and well-known rules, though they have not descended to us, whereby they distinguished the passages in the prophetic writings, which related to this important subject, from any others, because we find, that (*d*) when Herod summoned the Sanhedrim together, and demanded of them where Christ was to be born, they readily replied at Bethlehem in Judea, having the prophecy of Micah (*e*) to that purpose ready to produce.

We acknowledge again, that the prophecies concerning the Messiah were delivered, not only in an obscure manner, but in different proportions, and at very distant times. Thus to Adam and Eve he was promised in general (*f*) as a man; to Abraham, (*g*) as his posterity; to Jacob, (*h*) as descending from the tribe of Judah in particular; to David, that he should be of his family, and (*i*) the fruit of his body; to Micah, that he should be born at Bethlehem (*k*); to Isaiah, that his birth should be miraculous, and his mother a virgin (*l*); to the same prophet, that his death should be for (*m*) the redemption of mankind, to Daniel, (*n*) when the precise time of his suffering should be; to Haggai, lastly, and Zechariah and Malachi, that (*o*) all these events should be accomplished before the destruction of the second temple. [But the obscurity of the language in which the earliest of these prophecies were delivered, and the very gradual manner in which the veil was removed from their ultimate import, so far from furnish-

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| (<i>a</i>) <i>Stanhope's</i> Sermons at <i>Boyle's</i> Lecture. | (<i>b</i>) <i>I</i> osea xii. 10. | (<i>c</i>) <i>Numb.</i> xii. 8. |
| (<i>d</i>) <i>Matth.</i> ii. 3, &c. | (<i>e</i>) <i>Chap.</i> v. 2. | (<i>f</i>) <i>Gen.</i> iii. 15. |
| (<i>h</i>) <i>Ibid.</i> xlix. 10. | (<i>i</i>) <i>Psal</i> m-cxxxii. 11. | (<i>g</i>) <i>Ibid.</i> xxii. 18. |
| (<i>m</i>) <i>Ibid.</i> liii. | (<i>n</i>) <i>Chap.</i> ix. | (<i>k</i>) <i>Chap.</i> v. 2. |
| | | (<i>l</i>) <i>Isaiah</i> vii. 14. |
| | | (<i>o</i>) <i>Hag.</i> ii. <i>Zech.</i> xiv. <i>Mal.</i> iii. |

ing an objection to their having been dictated by the Spirit of God, are an illustrious proof of their Divine original. The object of prophecy never was to enable mankind to penetrate into futurity, which is, with infinite goodness as well as wisdom, concealed from the human race; but to keep alive in the minds of those to whom revelations were vouchsafed, the hope of that redemption which was so enigmatically promised to our first parents. Had the world at large been capable, in the days of Abraham, of receiving the sublime but simple religion which the Redeemer was to institute, we can conceive no reason for delaying his advent to so late a period, or for separating that patriarch and his family from the rest of mankind to be the repository of God's holy name, and of the various promises of future deliverance. But the world was not capable of this at that period, nor for many ages afterwards. The law was therefore interposed as a schoolmaster to bring the posterity of Abraham by his grandson Israel—and through them, all mankind, gradually to Christ. The law was therefore to be preserved in full force among the Israelites till it should accomplish this object, and no longer. But so prone were that people to idolatry, and to all the enormities combined with it, that, as St Chrysostom (*a*) well observes,—“Had the Jews been taught from the beginning that their law was temporary and to have an end, they would certainly have despised it. On this account, it seemed good to the Divine wisdom to throw a veil of obscurity over the prophecies which related to the Christian dispensation”—a veil which was gradually lifted up by the prophets, though never wholly removed till HE came, in whom all the prophecies were accomplished, when the law had run its appointed course. This agrees not more exactly with the nature of the most remarkable of these prophecies, than with the distant seasons at which they were delivered;] for the general prediction of a Saviour in human nature will be found to bear date, before that of his being Abraham's seed, about two thousand and fourscore years; from this to the declaration of his particular tribe, were two hundred and fourscore years; thence to the prophecy of his particular family, above six hundred years; after that, to the signification of his miraculous nativity, more than three hundred years; and from thence to the time of his public appearance in the world, three hundred and fifty years, † or thereabouts. Now, since these prophecies were thus delivered by degrees, and at such distant and different times, it may easily so happen, that, considering them singly and apart, we may find some other person and event, to which they may be adapted, without any great violence to the text; but then the right way in this case to make a judgment is, not by separate and particular passages, but by the connection of the whole, by the exact coincidence and entire agreement of all the prophecies, which at several times denoted the Messiah, brought into one point of light, and laid together. This is the only method we have to determine the matter; And, accordingly, let us now look into some of the principal passages of our Saviour's life, as it is recorded by the evangelists, and so see, whether they do not exactly agree with the several characters which the prophets have given us of the Messiah.

Our Lord Jesus, we are told, (*b*) was conceived and born of a pure virgin, without the concurrence of any man; for so the prophecy had foretold, that (*c*) “the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head,” and that (*d*) “a virgin should conceive and bear a son, and call his name Immanuel.” He was descended (*e*) of the family of David, and born (*f*) in the town of Bethlehem; because, in favour to that king, God had promised that (*g*) “he would establish his seed for ever,” and that (*h*) “out of Beth-

(*a*) *Homilia prima de prophetarum obscuritate.*

† [All these dates are different from what they are in Hales's Analysis; but that circumstance is of no importance in this reasoning, and the reader will find them all rectified in the preceding Volumes of this Work.]

(*b*) Matth. i. 18. and Luke i. 26, &c.

(*c*) Gen. iii. 15.

(*d*) Isa. vii. 14.

(*e*) Matth. i. 1. and Luke i. 27.

(*f*) Matth. ii. 5, 6.

(*g*) Psal. lxxxix. 4.

(*h*) Micah v. ii.

John vii. 1.
Luke ix. 37.
Mark ix. 14.
Matth. xvii. 14.
John v. 1. to
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
From Matth.

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lehem a Ruler of Israel should come, whose goings forth had been from everlasting :” And he was born (a) “in the reign of king Herod,” i. e. before the total dissolution of the Jewish government, and during the standing of the second temple, because one prophecy says, that (b) “the sceptre should not depart from Judah until Shiloh come ; and another, that (c) “the Desire of all nations should come, and by his presence make the glory of God’s latter house greater than that of the former.”

Well : But before his appearance in the world, (d) John the Baptist was appointed his forerunner, and came to bear witness of him, because the Lord, by the mouth of his prophets, had said, (e) “Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me ; (f) he shall cry in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight an highway for our God.” When he made his appearance in the world, he took up his chief residence (g) in the province of Galilee, because the prophet, speaking of the inhabitants of that country, tells us, that “upon them, (h) who dwelt before in the land of the shadow of death, did a great light shine, when they had it to say, unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder,” &c. When he came to converse in it, such was his quiet and inoffensive temper and behaviour, that the prophet did not misrepresent him, when he styled him, (i) “the Prince of peace,” and one who (k) “would not cry, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.” When he entered upon his public ministry, the very actions which the evangelical prophet had foretold of the Messiah, he performed to a tittle ; “For (l) he preached good tidings to the meek, and proclaimed liberty to the captives ; he (m) opened the eyes of the blind, and unstopped the ears of the deaf ; he made the lame man to leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing.”

But during the course of his ministry, our Saviour, we read, lived in a very mean obscure condition, and suffered at last a violent death : And why so ? Because of the Messiah it was foretold, that (n) “he should be despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief ; who should be cut off from the land of the living, and pour out his soul unto death.” But for whom should he suffer all this ? (o) For us men, and our salvation : For so it was appointed, that the Messiah should (p) “bear our griefs, and carry our sorrows ; that he should be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities ; because the Lord would lay upon him the iniquities of us all.” And in what manner was he to suffer ? With a patience and meekness answerable to the prophecy, (q) “He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth ; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.”

It might seem a little strange, that our Lord, who all his lifetime affected no popularity, should, a little before his death, (r) make his public entry into Jerusalem, and in a manner so very singular, had not the prophet called upon “the daughter of Zion (s) to rejoice greatly, because her king was coming unto her, bringing salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and a colt, the foal of an ass.” Strange, that (t) he should be betrayed by his own disciple, to whom he had been so very kind, had not the Psalmist foretold it in these words, (u) “Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lift up his heel against me :” And strange, that of all other deaths he should be sentenced to crucifixion, which was neither a Jewish punishment, nor proper to be inflicted (x) for the crime of blasphemy (y) that was alleged against him, had

(a) Matth. ii. 1.
and Luke vii. 27.

(h) Isa. ix. 2, 6.

(m) Ibid. xxxv. 5, 6.

(q) Ibid. ver. 7.

(u) Psal. xli. 9.

(b) Gen. xlix. 10.

(e) Mal. iii. 1.

(i) Ibid. ver. 6.

(n) Ibid. liii. 3.

(r) Matth. xxi. 2, &c.

(x) Levit. xxiv. 16.

(c) Haggai ii. 7.

(f) Isa. xl. 3.

(k) Ibid. xlii. 2.

(o) Col. i. 14.

(s) Zech. ix. 9.

(y) Matth. xxvi. 65.

(d) Matth. iii. 1.

(g) Matth. ii. 22, 23.

(l) Ibid. lxi. 1.

(p) Isa. liii. 4, 5, 6.

(t) Matth. x. 4.

not the same royal prophet determined the matter in these words; (a) "They pierced my hands and my feet; they stand staring and looking upon me."

Such then was the will of God, that the Saviour of the world should be crucified; but in what company did he suffer? The Gospel tells us, (b) "between two thieves, because the prophecy had declared, that he should (c) "be numbered with the transgressors." But how did the spectators behave while he was thus hanging upon the cross? Just in the manner that the Psalmist described; (d) "All they that see me laugh me to scorn, they shoot out the lip, and shake the head, saying, he trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, if he would have him." What did they give him to drink in the mean time? * A narcotic potion was generally allowed in such cases, to stupify the sense of pain, but in his nothing but vinegar was allowed, because the prophecy before had specified the liquor; (e) "They gave me gall to eat, and when I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar to drink." And what became of his clothes? All disposed of according to the prophecy; (f) "they parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots."

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

But under all these provocations and indignities, what did he do? Why, he prayed to God for the forgiveness of his crucifiers, because the prophet had foretold, that (g) "while he poured out his soul unto death, he should also make intercession for the transgressors." In his greater agonies what were his ejaculations to God? The same that the royal Psalmist, personating the Messiah in his extremity, has left upon record: (h) "My God, my God, look upon me: Why hast thou forsaken me, and art so far from my help, and from the words of my complaint?" What were the words wherein he gave up the Ghost? The very same that the Psalmist, in another place, had prescribed; (i) "Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit." But after our Saviour's death, in what manner was his body disposed of? Contrary to the custom of the Romans, who left those that suffered in this manner hanging upon the cross until they were consumed; and contrary to the intention of his enemies, who wished him no better than a malefactor's funeral, he was honourably and nobly interred, because it was preordained that (k) "he should make his grave with the rich in his death." After his burial, what became of his body? It was raised again, and restored from the state of the dead, because, in confidence of this, he laid down his life, that (l) "God would not leave his soul in hell, nor suffer his Holy One to see corruption." After his resurrection, and continuance for some time upon earth, what did he do next? In the sight of his disciples, and several other spectators, ascend triumphantly into heaven; for so the Divine order was, (m) "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, that the King of Glory may come in." After his ascension into heaven, what did he finally do? Send down the Holy Ghost upon his apostles, to enable them to propagate his religion all the world over; for such is the purport of the prophecy, (n) "Thou art gone up on high, thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, that (o) the mountain of the Lord's house might be established on the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and that all nations should flow unto it."

(a) Psal. xxii. 16.

(b) Matth. xxvii. 38.

(c) Isa. liii. 12.

(d) Matth. xxvii. 39, &c. Psal. xxii. 7, 8.

* For this the Jews ground themselves upon the words of Solomon, "Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that are of an heavy heart: Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more," Prov. xxxi. 7. The usual potion of this kind was frankincense in a glass of wine; and there is a tradition among them, that the ladies of the city of Jerusalem were at this charge, out of their own good-will, for the ease of the

poor sufferers: But notwithstanding this custom, what God foretold was fulfilled. *Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah*, p. 80.

(e) John xix. 28, 29. Psal. lxix. 21.

(f) Matth. xxvii. 35. Psal. xxii. 18.

(g) Luke xxiii. 34. Isa. liii. 12.

(h) Matth. xxvii. 46. Psal. xxii. 1.

(i) Luke xxiii. 46. Psal. xxxi. 5.

(k) Matth. xxvii. 57. Isa. liii. 9.

(l) Matth. xxviii. 6. Psal. xvi. 10.

(m) Luke xxiv. 51. Psal. xxiv. 7, 9.

(n) Acts ii. 1, &c. Psal. lxviii. 18.

(o) Isaiah ii. 2.

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&c. or 5440.
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31, &c.
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Upon the whole then, we may perceive, that the several things which the prophets had foretold of the promised Messiah were fulfilled in the person and actions of our blessed Saviour; but then there is something farther to be considered in this matter, and that is, the visible interposition of an over-ruling Providence in the completion of these predictions. (a) For, that our Lord should be born of a virgin, contrary to the known laws of nature; at the city of Bethlehem, when he was conceived at Nazareth; and under the declension of the Jewish polity, as it was predicted; that upon the cruelty of Herod, he should be carried into Egypt; upon the succession of Archelaus return into Judea, and settle his abode in the obscure country of Galilee, whence no good thing, much less so eminent a prophet, could have ever been expected to come: That the judge, who pronounced him innocent, should deliver him to death, and to the death of the cross, who (had he been guilty) must, by the law of the land, have been stoned: That he, who had so many enemies, should be betrayed by one of his disciples; and by a disciple who carried the bag, and consequently all his master's riches, for a vile sum of money; and that this money, the price of blood, should be employed in a work of charity, to buy a field to bury strangers in: That he, who spent all his time in doing good, should be doomed to suffer among thieves and malefactors; and the multitude, who were wont to pity dying criminals, should insult and deride him in his greatest misery: That in the division of his clothes, they should cast lots for his coat, and, contrary to the usage of the country, in the midst of his agonies give him vinegar to drink: That, contrary to the practice of the Romans, he that was crucified should be permitted to be buried, and although he died among malefactors, have persons of the first rank and character joining together in his honourable interment:—These, and several other particulars that might be produced, are so very strange and surprising, that they must needs strike every pious and devout soul with a profound sense of the unspeakable wisdom, as well as goodness of God, in accomplishing in Jesus what he had promised and foretold of the Messiah, by ways and means to human wisdom very unlikely, and very disproportionate. And if the predictions relating to the Messiah have, in this wonderful manner, and by the particular direction and appointment of Providence, thus met in the blessed Jesus, like lines in one common center, the natural result of this contemplation is, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

(b) For can it be imagined, with any worthy conception of God, that a work of love and wonder so great as the sending of his Son to redeem the world, should be in agitation for full four thousand years; that each succeeding age in this long space should have some notices of it; that the several characters he was to sustain should be described by different prophets, living at times and places so remote, that no confederacy could be suspected; that each of these prophets should draw, some, one line of him, and some, another, and point him out, some in one capacity and some in another; and above all, that every one of these strokes or lineaments should be directed by the unerring hand of God, to make at last one finished picture, on purpose that the original, when it appeared, might be found out, and distinguished by it; can it be imagined, I say, that a God of infinite truth, wisdom, and goodness, would have ever permitted, much less appointed, that our blessed Lord should, in every part and line, be so exactly like that piece, unless he intended that we should receive him as the true original? Unless we can entertain a thought so unworthy of God, I say, as that he designed to impose upon us in this whole dispensation, we cannot but conclude, that he would never have permitted all the marks belonging to the Messiah to have concurred in the life of our blessed Saviour, and by these marks have suffered so many millions of souls to have been mistaken in the object of their faith and worship, and thereupon, without any fault of

(a) *Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah*, p. 131.

(b) *Stanhope's Sermons at Boyle's Lectures*.

theirs, deluded into the heinous sin of idolatry, had he not appointed the man Christ Jesus to be the great Saviour of the world, and the Lord of life and glory.

“ But you are frequently mistaken (says the Jew, to avoid the force of this) in your application of these prophetical passages to your Jesus, which properly belonged to another person, and in him received their utmost accomplishment. The *xxiid* Psalm, for instance, which complains of the sufferings and indignities which its author endured, you refer to the Messiah, and thence apply to your Jesus; whereas it relates entirely to David, and the troubles he underwent under the persecution of Saul. (a) The prophecy of Micah, which makes mention of a Ruler, whose goings forth had been from everlasting, (whatever use you make of it) was only intended of Zerubbabel, who was sprung from the ancient house of David; and that famous *liiid* chapter of Isaiah, which is so frequently cited by the apostles, when rightly inquired into, is nothing else but a lively description of the sufferings of the Jews under the Babylonish, or some other captivity. Thus, by misapplying and misinterpreting several texts, in such a sense as the Jewish church never received, and the Spirit of God never intended, you bedeck your Jesus with feathers that are none of his own, and then cry out, How well he becomes them, and how exactly they befit him!”

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

The completion of prophecies in the person of our Saviour Christ, is one of the most general arguments that the first Christians made use of, in order to convert such as were persuaded of their Divine authority. St Peter, (b) in his first public sermon that he made out of the *xvith* and *cxth* Psalms, cites two passages, which he plainly shews could not be intended of the patriarch David, to prove our Lord's resurrection and exaltation to glory. (c) St Paul, who, by being brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, understood the force of this argument, uses more proofs of this kind than any other writer of the New Testament, as the least cast of an eye into his epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews will shew: (d) and St Matthew, who wrote his Gospel for the use of the Jews more particularly, and for that reason (as some imagine) in the Hebrew tongue, is more express and copious in his application of the prophecies to our Blessed Saviour than any of the other evangelists.

Now, (to mention no more than these) how absurd would it have been for these apostles, who were no strangers to the Jewish way of arguing, to alledge any passage in the prophets as relating to the Messiah, which properly belonged to another person in whom it had its accomplishment? Such a method of proceeding could not fail of discovering their confidence and folly, of exposing them to the scorn and ridicule of their adversaries, and instead of gaining proselytes, of ruining the cause, which by such unfair practices they endeavoured to maintain. It is but supposing then, that these apostles were men of common sense, and desirous to promote the cause that they had taken in hand, and then we can hardly think that they argued from any prophecies concerning the Messiah but such as really belonged to him, and such as the whole Jewish church acknowledged so to do.

St Peter, by virtue of the sermon which he preached on the day of Pentecost, made about three thousand converts to the Christian faith; and yet it is obvious, that the whole hinge of his discourse turns upon the testimony of the prophets: had he therefore applied this testimony, either to persons to whom it did not belong, or in a sense contrary to its true intentment, his doctrine must have been exploded at once, and could never have met with such uncommon success. And in like manner, as to the subsequent conversions which the apostles made, (e) how can we imagine that such a number of Jews of all degrees, rulers, priests, and scribes of all sects, men of learning, and who, by their station and profession, were obliged to know the Scriptures, should

(a) *Collins's Discourse of the Grounds and Reasons*, page 44.

(b) Acts ii. 14, &c

(c) *Ibid.* xxii. 3.

(d) *Stanhope's Sermons at Boyle's Lectures*.

(e) *Bishop Chandler's*

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forsake the religion they were accustomed to, upon the authority of passages which, in their proper meaning and intendment, were so far from countenancing, that they openly confronted the new religion they were to embrace; and all this without any view of worldly interest, with the certain hazard of their lives here, and the loss of God's favour hereafter, in case of insincerity?

[We have already seen the necessity of throwing a vail over the prophecies of the Christian dispensation, for much the same reason that it has been found expedient in the eastern and all despotic countries, to teach the great their duty by well-conceived fables or apologues. In the common apologues the story is of no importance, and sometimes expressed in language, which literally interpreted signifies what is neither true nor possible; but when the moral comprehended under it is obvious, it has been found by experience the best way of inculcating moral truth on those for whose instruction it was conceived; an apologue would not surely lose this effect, were it to inculcate the same truth under a story which *might* be true, and perhaps *had* been true somewhere, in its literal sense; and in that case it would express two truths, one *historical* and the other *moral*. Let us view the Jewish prophecies of the Messiah in the same light, and we shall see instantly that they might point to him in a way sufficiently obvious to answer all the purposes of prophecy, even if they should have had an inferior accomplishment in some other person. That the patriarchal religion, the Mosaic law, and the Gospel of Christ, are but three great parts of one entire and progressive scheme of revelation, we have had repeated occasion to observe in the course of this work. They must therefore be connected with each other; and this they can have been only by a chain of prophecies delivered under the first and second dispensations, or by ritual services, pointing to the last and greatest. Each dispensation however had its destined course to run, during which it was to be had in reverence by all who were under it. Hence we have seen the necessity of veiling the prophecies of the Messiah, which were delivered under the law, in allegorical language; but to shew the connection between the two dispensations, those allegories are all taken from the law, and often, when interpreted literally, appear to refer to some illustrious person administering the affairs of the Jewish theocracy. Were that person and the story related of him altogether *fictitious*, no man would hesitate to apply the prophecy to Christ, were it perceived to be applicable to him without putting any greater force on the language than what must be put on the language of all apologues. If this be so, why should we object to the application of a prophecy to Christ, only because it has in part perhaps been justly applied to some illustrious person who really appeared before him, especially if the language in which it is expressed be such as we cannot suppose that the speaker would have employed, if his view had reached no farther than to the first and inferior personage? Such a prophecy may be compared to an apologue founded in real facts, which surely would not therefore lose its moral effect; and if so, no candid man will say that a prophecy, delivered under the Mosaic economy, is inapplicable to Christ, only because it has in part been applied to some other person, and can be applied to none but to them two, nor in all its bearings even to the former of them. The inseparable connection between the Mosaic and Christian economies gives a peculiar propriety to this double sense of some of the prophecies; and accordingly the Jews themselves never objected, in the age of our Lord, to the application to the Messiah of prophecies which had, in a primary and inferior sense, been fulfilled in part by some other personage. A primary and a secondary sense of the same prophecy must indeed have been as familiar to them as the literal story and moral import of parables and apologues; for some of the most illustrious prophecies, which related wholly to their own economy, foretold in the same language two distinct future events, of which we have a striking instance in the book of Joel, where (a), in

the prediction of an approaching ravage by locusts is foretold, in the same words, a succeeding desolation by the Assyrian army. Should any believer therefore insist, as the unbeliever Mr Collins did, that the famous prophecy of Isaiah (a)—“Unto us a child is born, &c.” was literally and directly intended of some Jewish monarch, and that nothing but our ignorance of the eastern hyperbolical style prevents us from perceiving this, I might perhaps agree with him as soon as he should produce a Jewish monarch born in the days of Isaiah, to whom any part of it is literally applicable. But I should still contend that the same monarch was viewed by the prophet as a type or figure of the future Messiah, to whom alone could be given with any kind of propriety the name of “Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace;” and I should do so chiefly because the ancient Jews, who considered it as applicable in an inferior sense to Hezekiah, were unanimously of opinion that the prophet’s views extended to the reign of their expected Messiah, of whom Hezekiah was but a type or figure ‡.]

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

Upon the whole, therefore, we may conclude, that every Jew, converted to the Christian faith, is an implicit proof, that the apostles allegations of the ancient prophecies, both as to the ground and sense of them, were agreeable to their received notions of them; insomuch that, were we at leisure to enter into particulars, we might shew, that it is hardly possible to name one single prediction of the many applied to the Blessed Jesus, which one or other of their most celebrated writers do not acknowledge to belong to the Messiah.

The modern Jews, it must be owned, have fallen off from the notions of their more ingenuous ancestors, and do deny the prophecies quoted in the New Testament those views that we would ascribe to them: (b) But whoever considers the destruction of their city and polity, which confounded all their expectations of a glorious Messiah, and put them upon new measures in the application of such predictions as they saw must needs have been fulfilled while their state and temple stood: Whoever considers the darkness and ignorance that would necessarily ensue upon their long dispersion, and many sad calamities, when they fell into the hands of persecuting powers, who hated them and their religion most implacably: Whoever considers their neglect of applying themselves to the study of the written law, and attending wholly to their oral, and affecting to be curious in ceremonies, while they continued careless of their doctrines: Whoever considers their violent prejudice against Jesus and his disciples, which, as it stuck at nothing, though never so false or wicked, to oppose them, might easily put them upon tampering with the Scriptures, and, by interpolations or defalcations, labouring to make them look another way: And, lastly, whoever considers that judicial blindness and hardness of heart, so often and expressly threatened, and so visibly and lamentably afflicted upon this once elect people of God: (May he, in his infinite mercy, so open their eyes, that they may see the wonderous things of the law, and its agreement with the Gospel!) Whoever considers these things, I say, will not be at a loss for reasons why the present synagogue have departed from the sentiments of the ancient, and are so earnest to apply to David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Zerubbabel, or any other person of note, what their ancestors never thought of attributing to any other than the promised Messiah.

(c) One of their famous interpreters, in his comment upon the xxiid Psalm, after some feeble efforts to wrest that evidence out of our hands, makes at length this ample confession, “Our great masters, (d) says he, have interpreted this Psalm of Messiah the King, but I shall interpret it of David himself, that we may have wherewith to answer the heretics.”

(a) Chap. ix. 6—8.

‡ See the doctrine of types, and of a primary and secondary sense of some prophecies, illustrated in a very superior manner by Bishop Warburton in the sixth

book of *Divine Legation of Moses*.

(b) *Stanhope’s Sermons at Boyle’s Lectures*.

(c) *Ibid.*

(d) *R. Sol. Jarchi*.

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But, with all his art and subtilty, he can never make it out, how David, with any propriety, can say of himself, (*a*) "As for me, I am a worm, and no man, the very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people." The greatest affliction that ever befel that prince was his expulsion from his capital city, upon the rebellion of his son Absalom; and (*b*) Shimei's cursing and upbraiding him may seem perhaps to countenance this complaint, (*c*) "All they that see me, laugh me to scorn, they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads;" but we nowhere read in his history, that his enemies ever (*a*) "pierced his hands or his feet," much less that, after they had made an end of him, "they parted his garments among them, and cast lots upon his vesture." It was our Blessed Saviour alone in whom this prediction was verified; of him alone, that his enemies took up the taunting proverb, and said, (*e*) "He trusted in God that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, if he would have him;" to him alone, that these words can, with any tolerable construction, belong, (*f*) "Many oxen are come about me, fat bulls of Basan close me in on every side; they gape upon me with their mouths, as it were a ramping and roaring lion;" as he indeed appropriates the whole Psalm to himself, when, in his dying minutes, he utters this citation, (*g*) "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

David indeed, in all his troubles, had no occasion to make this lamentation; for though the malice and persecutions of Saul were upon him, yet he had always abundant reason to say of God, (*h*) "Thou art my stony rock, and my defence, my Saviour, my God, and my might; my buckler, the horn also of my salvation, and my refuge: Therefore will I follow upon mine enemies, and overtake them; neither will I turn again till I have destroyed them." His splendour and greatness; his victories and conquests, the reduction of his foes, and the enlargement of his kingdom, made him a proper emblem of our Saviour's exaltation and triumph over our spiritual enemies; but there are few passages in his life which resemble his sufferings, and none at all that will justify this complaint, (*i*) "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my gums:" So true is that observation of Grotius, (*k*) "That partiality was the cause of these new explications among the Jews, and that those, which they formerly received, agreed very well with the sense of Christians."

Upon the decree of Cyrus for the restoration of the Jews, we find Zerubbabel, among other princes of the people, superintending matters, and taking upon him the government of the tribe to which he belonged; but that he should be the person intended by Micah's prophecy is a thing impossible, because he was not born in Bethlehem, which is the place assigned for the birth of the ruler that the prophet mentions, but in Babylon, as his name imports. That it was essentially necessary for the Messiah to be born in (*l*) Bethlehem, and no where else, is plain from the answer which the scribes and Pharisees make Herod upon his consulting them, and their quotation of Micah for the proof of it; is plain from the general notion, which not only the learned, but the vulgar, at that time had imbibed, viz. (*m*) "That Christ was to come of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was born;" and is plain from the petition in their liturgy, wherein they still pray for the advent of the Messiah in these terms: (*n*) "Shake thyself from the dust, arise, put on thy beautiful garments, O my people! by the hand of Ben-jesse, the Bethlehemite, bring redemption near to my soul:" So that the prophecy, in all reason, must be applied to the person that was born there, and not to one whose place of nativity was in a distant country. It is to be observed farther, that Zerubbabel was never any ruler of Israel; for though he might

(*a*) Psal. xxii. 6.
ses 17, 18.

(*h*) Psal. xviii. 2. 37.
(*l*) Matthew ii. 1, &c.
of Christianity.

(*b*) 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8.
(*e*) Ibid. ver. 8.
(*i*) Ibid. xxii. 14, 15.
(*m*) John vii. 42.

(*c*) Psal. xxii. 7.
(*f*) Ibid. ver. 12, 13.

(*d*) Ibid. ver.
(*g*) Ibid. ver. 1.
(*k*) Grotius, de Verit. lib. v. sect. xviii.
(*n*) See Bishop Chandler's Defence

be at the head of the captivity for some years, yet it was without the title and authority of a governor, and when he had executed his commission, he returned to Babylon, and there died. But even supposing he were never so much a governor, it is certainly carrying the matter too far to say of him, that he (a) "should stand and rule in the strength of the Lord, and in the majesty of the Lord his God;" much more it is so to say, that the going forth, or birth of this Ruler, was of old, and from the days of eternity, (as the marginal note has it), which is only applicable to the Messiah, and in a proper sense only verified in our Blessed Saviour, (b) "who in the beginning was with God."

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

And, in like manner, if we consider the words of the prophet Isaiah in the liiid chapter, and compare them with our Lord's history, as the evangelists have recorded it, we shall soon perceive that they are applicable to none but our Blessed Saviour only. for (to wave other arguments that might be drawn from them) with what propriety of construction can any of these passages, (c) "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed," be applied to the Jewish nation? Whenever did we hear that the Jews "bore the griefs and carried the sorrows" of others; that they were wounded for other mens transgressions, and bruised for iniquities not their own? The public calamities which God at any time sent upon them, are, by all the prophets, imputed to their own sins; but the person here afflicted is said to have done "no violence, neither was any deceit found in his mouth;" and does this character suit them under any captivity, or other sort of calamity that the prophet might have in view? If we will believe him, it is plain that he had another opinion of them, when, in the very beginning of his prophecy, we find him lamenting them and their captivity in these words: (d) "Ah, sinful nation! A people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters; they have forsaken the Lord, they are gone backwards; wherefore your country is desolate, your cities are burnt with fire, your land strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate as overthrown by strangers."

The sum of our answer is this. If our Saviour and his apostles cannot be supposed, with any justness of reasoning or prospect of success, to allege prophecies concerning the Messiah, which the Jewish church at that time did not acknowledge to be intended of him; if all the prophecies, thus alleged, do even yet appear, by several of their most renowned doctors, to be interpreted of the Messiah; if the xxiid Psalm cannot, with any propriety of construction, be applied to David; nor the ivth chapter of Micah to Zerubbabel; nor the liiid of Isaiah to the Jewish nation in general; and if good reasons may be assigned why the present and ancient doctors of the Jewish church do differ in the manner of applying the predictions of the prophets;—then is the Christian interpretation of them, which appears to be plain and natural, and has antiquity on its side, not to be less esteemed, because some, out of partiality and prejudice, have forced their wits to invent another.

Nay, even supposing that there were more grounds than what hitherto have appeared to dispute the justness of the allegation of any prophecy, yet still we Christians must aver, that the application of Christ and his apostles is to be preferred before that of any other, because it was attended with such irresistible proof of its truth and fidelity, as must overbear all objections to the contrary. (e) For, upon a dispute of the application of some passage, or a competition of two different senses of the same passage, can any thing in nature be more decisive than the testimony of God? And can the testimony of God appear by any stronger evidence than by the power of miracles, supporting the allegation? God certainly knew the intention of every prophecy deli-

(a) Micah v. 4.

(b) John i. 2.

(c) Isaiah liii. 4, 5.

(d) Ibid. i. 4, &c.

(e) Rogers's Necessity of Revelation.

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vered by his Spirit; and therefore if Christ and his apostles, when they applied any prophecy to the Messiah, gave the best proof that could be given of their being sent by God, and of their speaking and acting by his commission, God himself must be understood as confirming their application. The authority of the application, or of the exposition, must, in such a case, be equal to that of the prophecy; for there cannot be a better proof that the prophet was sent from God than the expositor gives of his mission; and the reason for his assenting to the one, as well as the other, is on both sides the same.

The result of this whole enquiry is this,—That since our Blessed Saviour appeals to the writings of the prophets for the proof of his being the Messiah, or Messenger sent from God to deliver his will to mankind; and since the marks and characters which the prophets give of the Messiah are found all to agree and unite in him, according to the account which the evangelists give us of his life, we have all the reason in the world to believe that he was really the person he pretended to be, that his doctrine, consequently, is the Word of God, and his religion (a) “The grace of God that bringeth salvation, and hath appeared unto all men; teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the Great God and our Saviour JESUS CHRIST.”

CHAPTER III.

FROM OUR LORD'S TRANSFIGURATION TO HIS LAST ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.

THE HISTORY.

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THE day following our Lord's transfiguration (for that transaction was very probably in the night-time †), as he came down from the Mount, he perceived the scribes in deep debate †² with the apostles he had left behind him; and while he was enquiring into the

(a) Tit. ii. 11, &c.

† The evangelist acquaints us, that while our Saviour was at prayer on the Mount. St “Peter, and they that were with him, were heavy with sleep,” Luke ix. 32. which in some measure confirms the conjecture, that the transfiguration was in the night; a time much more proper for the display of the lustre of such an appearance than if it had happened in the broad day-light. *Cabmet's Commentary.*

†² What the subject-matter of this debate was, the

evangelists have not informed us; but it seems not unlikely, that the scribes were disputing with the apostles about their master's method of ejecting devils, and the power which, in that matter, he had conferred upon them; because, in the case before them, they saw them nonplussed, and not able to cast a devil out of one, who, in his absence, was brought to them. This is the rather probable, not only because our Saviour's dispossessing devils was what gruelled and vexed the scribes and Pharisees more than all

subject of their dispute, a certain man, breaking through the crowd, came, and fell prostrate at his feet, and besought him to have pity upon his only son, a deplorable object, a lunatic || and possessed, deaf and dumb, often thrown upon the ground, and into the fire and water, racked with violent convulsions, accompanied with dismal outcries, foamings, bruises, and torments, and every way in so desperate a condition, that his disciples, in his absence, were not able to cure him. Our Lord, upon hearing of this, was † not a little grieved at the want of faith in his disciples, but ordered the child to be brought to him. As he was drawing near, the devil began to rack him with convulsions, which put the father in a terrible fright; and when our Lord commanded the evil spirit to depart out of the young man, and never to molest him more, after some hideous outcries, he tore and distorted him to such a degree, that he left him breathless on the ground, so that many concluded he was quite dead: But Jesus, taking him by the hand, lifted him up, and delivered him to his father perfectly cured, to the great astonishment of all the spectators. And when his disciples in private desired to know the reason why they could not cast out this spirit, he imputed it partly to their want of faith, and partly to this spirit's being of a kind †² which was not to be ejected without fasting and prayer.

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

his other miracles, and forced them to the sorry refuge of—"He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils;" but because, upon his coming to the timely relief of his apostles, and demanding of the scribes, what they were questioning and disputing about, it immediately follows, "One of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit:—And I spake to thy disciples, that they should cast him out, and they could not," Mark ix. 17, 18. *Pool's Annotations.*

|| The word *σεληνιάζεται*, coming from *σελήνη*, the moon, answers exactly to the English *lunatic*, from *luna*; but there is a mistake in rendering it: For, whereas the English word *lunatic* is commonly taken for a madman, such a one especially whose distemper grows worse towards the full of the moon, it is plain, from all symptoms, such as being convulsed, foaming at the mouth, grinding his teeth, falling into the fire, and bruising and tearing himself, &c. that the disorder under which this person laboured was an epilepsy, or the falling sickness. Now the reason why this disease is expressed by the word *σεληνιάζεται*, is, because the moon has the same influence on it that it has in madness. Both distempers lie in the brain, and the changes of the moon affect those that are subject to the one as well as the other. When therefore the evangelists tell us of this epileptic, that the devil took him, that he threw him down, cast him into a fit, and made him tear and bruise himself, the meaning of all this is, that as, in those days, it was a common thing for the devil to have power over mens bodies, which power he employed in bringing diseases upon them, so it was in the present case. The devil that possessed this young man, cast him into frequent fits of the falling sickness (as all demoniacs, we find, have one distemper or other attending them), of which there was no way to cure him but by casting out the devil. *Hammond's Annotations.*

† The rebuke which our Saviour utters upon this occasion, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you?" &c. Matth. xvii. 17. seems

to be intended for the whole company, and every one to have a share in it, in proportion to their deserts. The disciples are not exempted; for they are charged with infidelity, ver. 20. The father of the patient is pointed at, for his faith was wavering, Mark ix. 21, &c. And the whole nation of the Jews is included in it; for this was expressly their character of old, "A very froward and perverse generation, and children in whom is no faith," Deut. xxxii. 5, 20. *Beausobre's Annotations.*

†² Josephus, who himself was a Pharisee, and well acquainted with the notions of every sect among the Jews, gives it for a current opinion, that the demons, in his and some preceding ages, were nothing else but the souls of wicked men, who after death took possession of the living, and were continually either afflicting and tormenting, or exciting and soliciting them to such sins, as they found were agreeable and complexional to them; and that, according to their different ways of vexing or tempting those that they possessed, they had different appellations given them, an unclean spirit, a deaf and dumb spirit, a spirit of infirmity, &c. In conformity to this notion perhaps it is, that our Saviour here takes notice of the different kinds of evil spirits, and as among wicked men there are different degrees of impiety, and some are more hardened and profligate than others; so he seems to intimate, that some of these spirits are more desperate and malicious than others. Matth. xii. 45. But all of them obstinate enough, and (might they have their own option) unwilling to leave the bodies they have taken possession of. Here they think themselves safe, and in some measure screened from the Divine vengeance; and therefore, we find them at sometimes crying to our Lord, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee? Art thou come to torment us," Matth. viii. 29. And as others, when commanded to depart, tearing and torturing the possessed, and quitting their habitation not without much reluctance, Mark ix. 26. The apostles, no doubt, had conjured this evil spirit before in their master's name,

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From the Mount of transfiguration our Lord proceeded in his journey through the other parts of Galilee towards Capernaum; and as they were in the way, he acquainted his disciples, the second time, with his approaching death and resurrection, desiring them to take good notice of what he told them; but the hopes of a temporal kingdom had so intoxicated their minds, that they found it very difficult to believe † or conceive what he said, and yet they were afraid to ask him to explain it.

In the same journey there arose a dispute || among the apostles, which of them should have the chief place of dignity †² in their master's kingdom, still dreaming of a tem-

and, on several occasions, had found the prevailing power of faith, even when theirs was not so well improved as it was at present; and yet, how faith becomes necessary in the exorcism of devils, when we find strangers doing it in the name of Christ, Mark ix. 38; or how the faith of the apostles came to be defective now, when not many days before it was so very effectual; why some evil spirits were proof against the name of Christ, whilst others fled at the bare mention of it; and why some surrendered at the first summons, while fasting and prayer were the only artillery that could dislodge others: These, and many more questions that might be raised from our Saviour's words, are points wherein the best commentators we have met with have not once attempted to give us any satisfaction. *Calmet's Commentary*. [In the expression—"But this kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting"—there must be confessed to be a difficulty not easy to be removed. Whitby however seems to have done more towards removing it, than *Calmet* in this long note quoted by our author. According to the English commentator, our Lord doth not here mean to express the pertinacity of any particular kind of devils, far less the power which the great sins of the possessed had given them over him, for the person out of whom the disciples could not on this occasion eject the devil had been possessed from his childhood—*παιδίδης*—when he could have been guilty of no great sin; but the import of the expression was to inform his disciples, that the miraculous faith necessary to the working of miracles, being the special gift of God, was to be sought for by devotion, and all the means calculated to give ardour to that devotion.]

† The words in the text are, "They understood not this saying, and it was hid from them," Luke ix. 45. They understood our Saviour's words, no doubt, and what the import was of his being "delivered into the hands of men, and put to death;" but then they could not comprehend how their master, whom they knew to be the Messiah, and Son of God, and whom, consequently, they believed to be immortal and eternal, could possibly be put to death, or suffer the affronts and outrages of men. These notions to them seemed incompatible, and therein they conceived a mystery which they could not understand: But the modern Jews have endeavoured to reconcile these two notions, by inventing the distinction of Messiah Ben Joseph, who was to die, and Messiah Ben David, who was to triumph and live for ever. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*.

|| There is some small difference in the several

ways wherein the evangelists have related this matter. St Matthew tells us, that "the disciples came to Jesus, saying, who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" chap. xviii. 1. St Mark, that Christ put this question to them, "and they held their peace," chap. ix. 34. and St Luke, that they had been disputing this point among themselves, and Jesus, "perceiving the thought of their hearts, took a child," &c. chap. ix. 46, 47. Now, to reconcile this seeming repugnancy, we must observe, that as our Saviour was going to Capernaum his disciples followed him, "discussing among themselves (as St Mark has it) who of them was to be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven;" that when they came to him in the house, having still the same ambitious notion in their minds, he asked them, "What was it that you discoursed of in the way?" But they, being ashamed to tell him, "held their peace;" and that then our Saviour, who well understood what the subject of their discourse had been, endeavoured, by the example of a child, to cure their distemper, and to inform them what disposition of mind was proper to qualify them both for his kingdom of grace here, and his kingdom of glory hereafter. St Matthew indeed, according to our translation, represents the thing as if the disciples had put the question to their master, "who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" But that the participle *λέγοντες* relates not to Jesus, but to the disciples, and means not the external speech, but the inward reasoning of their minds, is obvious from their silence which St Mark takes notice of, and our Saviour's perceiving the thought of their hearts, which St Luke remarks: For had themselves propounded the question to our Saviour, (as the version in St Matthew seems to imply), we cannot see why they should not answer his demand, which tended to the same purpose; nor can we imagine why he should be represented "as perceiving the thoughts of their hearts," had they already declared these thoughts in plain words. *Whitby's Annotations*.

†² The apostles, as well as the other Jews, had imbibed the notion, which they never got quit of, until the descent of the Holy Ghost instructed them better, that the Messiah, when he came upon earth, should erect a temporal kingdom; and, as the Jews in general expect, that they should then be constituted Lords over all other nations; so the apostles, who believed their master to be the Messiah, were naturally led to think, that they should have the preference before all other Jews; and that, since the king Messiah, according to the custom of other sovereigns, was to have some officers of the highest rank,

peral sovereignty. This our Saviour by his Divine Spirit knew ; and therefore, to give an effectual check to their ambitious thoughts, he first informed them, that the only way for any man to become great in his kingdom, was to be lowly in his own esteem ; and then calling a little child †, and setting him in the midst of them, he proposed him as a pattern of meekness and humility ; recommended such children, and in them all humble Christians to the favour of mankind ; cautioned them against doing any injury †², or giving any offence to such, because of their guardian angels * ; and, to remove the occasion of all such offences, exhorted them to mortify their inordinate affections, though they were as dear to them as an eye, an hand, or a foot, because his heavenly Father (like a diligent shepherd that delights in the recovery of a stray-sheep) was unwilling that any believer should perish. Together with these reasons against scandal and offences, he prescribed some excellent rules in relation to brotherly reproof, church-censures, and forgiveness of injuries ; and, for the enforcement of this last duty, he propounded the parable of a certain king, who, calling his servants to account, found

From Matth. xi. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

they made no question but that some of them would be made choice of, though they were not so well agreed who were the fittest or most deserving of these high posts of honour. Some of them were our Lord's relations, and others had parts and endowments extraordinary ; of some he had given high commendations, and others he had admitted to a participation in his most secret retirements. These things might possibly raise some emulation among them ; and therefore, as our Saviour's dominion was not of this world, he plainly tells them, that all such worldly desires and expectations were inconsistent with that spiritual kingdom which he was to erect, and wherein " he, who desired to be first, was to be last of all, and servant of all," Mark ix. 35. *Whitby's* and *Pool's* Annotations.

† Some of the ancients are of opinion, that this child was St Ignatius, who was afterwards bishop of Antioch, and famous in the Christian church for his writing and dying in the defence of the truth. However this be, it is certain, that a child, who has no concern for dominion or empire over others, who is free from all covetous desires of wealth, and knows nothing of what a post of honour means, was in this case a very proper emblem of that simplicity, innocence, and humility, that our Lord requires in all his disciples. *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Whitby's* Annotations.

† The words in the caution are,—“ Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea,” Matth. xviii. 6. To offend, or scandalize, is to discourage men in the profession and practice of religion, and by indignities and persecutions, as well as by bad examples, to occasion their apostatizing from the faith: for we can hardly imagine, that so severe a punishment as is here threatened should be inflicted for a crime of less aggravation than what this amounts to. Grotius, upon the place, is of opinion, that the millstone about the neck alludes to a custom of drowning among the Syrians. But St Jerome thinks that this manner of execution was in use among the Jews ; for, according to Dr Alix, it was customary for them “ to cast execrable men into the

Dead Sea with a stone tied to them.” It is certain, from Diodorus Siculus, and others, that, among the Greeks, this was the ancient punishment for sacrilegious persons ; and from Suetonius we may learn, that, for the pride and covetousness wherewith some in public offices had infested the province where they lived, Augustus had them cast into the river with great weights about their necks. *Whitby's* Annotations.

* It were too nice, perhaps, to say, that every distinct man has his distinct guardian angel. It may be true, sometimes, that many have but one, and it may be true, at other times, that one has many, as we find Jacob had at Mahanaim, and Elisha at Dothan ; but this we may safely affirm, that no good man is without an angel, to inspect his behaviour, and to solicit his well-being. To this purpose Abraham tells his servant, travelling to Nahor, “ The Lord will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way,” Gen. xxiv. 40. and Jacob makes mention of one who “ had redeemed him from all evil,” and wishes the same protection to his children, Gen. xlviii. 16. The Psalmist gives us express testimony, that the “ angel of the Lord standeth round about those that fear him,” Psalm xxxiv. 7. And that passage which the devil applies to our Saviour, “ he shall give his angels charge over thee, and keep thee in all thy ways,” is delivered by the Psalmist as true of every servant of Christ, as well as of Christ himself ; for they are all ministring spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.” *Young's* Serm. vol. ii.

[This seems to me to be very erroneous and very dangerous doctrine, which hath no foundation in the word of God. If no good man be without an angel to inspect his behaviour, and to *solicit his well-being*, then is it *not* true that there “ is but one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.” That the holy angels are often employed by God in his government of this sublunary world, is indeed clearly to be proved by holy writ ; that they have powers over matter and inferior minds analogous to the powers which men possess—greater indeed in extent, but still limited, is a thing which might reasonably be supposed, if it were not declared ; but if there be a proposition in *metaphysics* or *ontology* which is incon-

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that one of them owed him an immense sum, no less than ten thousand talents †, which upon his insolvency, and humble petition, he freely forgave; and yet this very wretch was no sooner out of the king's presence, than he seized upon his fellow-servant for a trifle of a debt, a debt of an hundred pence only, and cast him into prison, even though he had used the same pathetic intreaties to him, that himself had done to the king his master: which when the king came to understand, he sent for the ungrateful villain; upbraided him with his baseness and cruelty; and then in great rage ordered him to prison until he should discharge the whole debt. "And †² so likewise shall my heavenly Father (says our Lord in the application) deal with all such as will not forgive their brother's trespasses from their hearts."

While he was giving these instructions to his disciples, he was interrupted by John, the son of Zebedee, informing him of a certain stranger †³ who cast out devils in his name, but because he was not of their fraternity, that he had forbidden him; which conduct Jesus by no means could approve of, because he looked upon it as a sure argument, that whoever did miracles in his name could be no enemy to his person.

With this discourse they arrived to Capernaum, where the collectors †⁴ of a certain

trovertible, it is surely that no created being is possessed of the incommunicable attribute of *ubiquity* or *omnipresence*. Now it is expressly said in the Gospel, "that in *heaven*, their angels (the angels of the little ones) do *always* behold the face of our Lord's Father who is in *heaven*." These angels therefore are always in heaven, and therefore cannot be at the same time on earth inspecting the conduct of either good or bad men. The texts quoted by Dr Young are nothing to the purpose. The angel mentioned by Abraham and Jacob was probably the uncreated ANGEL OF THE COVENANT guiding his servants to the accomplishment of those great objects for which the family of Abraham was separated from the rest of the world; and what the Psalmist says of the angel of the Lord standing round about those that fear him, seems to be nothing more than a highly poetical description of Providence continually watching over the pious and virtuous man. We are indeed taught by the apostle that the angels are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them that shall be heirs of salvation;" but they are all, however high in rank, nothing more than ministering or *servant* spirits—not invested with authority of their own—but sent forth *occasionally* to do such service as may be required of them for such as shall be heirs of salvation; and from the words of our Lord we learn (and we learn nothing more) that they are employed in the same way for the benefit of little children. As the vulgar doctrine of each man's having a guardian angel constantly beside him, is contrary to all the notions which can be consistently formed of the nature of men and of angels, so does it receive no countenance from the words of our Saviour, nor, I am persuaded, from any other text of Scripture rightly understood.] See *Bishop Horsley's Sermons*, vol. ii. Sermon 29. and *Hardy's Greek New Testament*.

† Which in our money amount to one million eight hundred and seventy five thousand pounds; whereas, the hundred pence that his fellow-servant was indebted to him, was but about three pounds two shillings and sixpence.

†³ The doctrinal observation that properly results

from the text is this,—That our sins, once forgiven, may, by a forfeiture of that pardon by our future misbehaviour, be again charged upon us; for God's pardons in this life are not absolute, but conditional only. According to the petition of the Lord's prayer, they are answerable to our dealings with others, and are likely to be no longer continued to us than we perform the condition. *Whitby's* and *Hammond's* Annotations.

†³ That this man did truly cast out devils, our Lord's answer supposes, and his disciples saw with their eyes: But then the question is,—How a person who did not follow Christ could cast out devils in his name? To which it may be answered, 1st, That this person might believe in Jesus, without being one of his retinue, and follow his doctrine, though he did not his person. 2dly, He might do miracles in the name of Jesus Christ, without being one of his true disciples, even as Judas is supposed to have done, and those others to whom our Lord will profess, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity," *Matth. vii. 23.* Or, 3dly, He might be a disciple of John the Baptist, and so do his miracles in the name of Christ, shortly to come. But by what means soever it was that he did them, it is no small confirmation of the truth of Christianity, that our Saviour's name was thus powerful, even among those that did not follow him, and therefore were incapable of doing anything by way of compact with him. *Whitby's* and *Pool's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

†⁴ Every Jew that was twenty years old, was obliged to pay annually two attic drachms, or half a shekel. (about fifteen pence of our money) for the use of the sanctuary, *Exod. xxx. 13. 16.* or to buy sacrifices and other things necessary for the service of the temple: And that this was the tribute which the collectors here demanded, and not any tax payable to the Roman emperors, (as some imagine) is evident not only from our Saviour's argument, viz. That he was the Son of that heavenly King to whom it was paid, and consequently had a right to plead his exemption; but from the word, *διδραχμα*, which, according to *Jō-*

tribute for the use of the temple, came to Peter, and asked him if his master was accused to pay it? And when Peter went in to acquaint him with the officers demands, "Of whom (says our Lord, preventing him) do the kings of the Gentiles take tribute? Of their own children, or of strangers?" Peter answered, "Of strangers: If so, (re-joined our Saviour) then are the children free;" meaning, that since Gentile kings did not exact tribute of their own household, this tribute, which was paid to God for his temple, was not due from him, who was his Son, nor from them who were his domestics; however, to avoid all occasions of offence, he ordered him to go and cast an hook into the sea, because in the mouth of the first fish that he caught, he would find a piece of money †, just of proper value to give to the collectors for them both: Which accordingly came to pass.

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

About this time the †² feast of Tabernacles drew near; and some of our Lord's relations (out of vanity more than good will) were very earnest with him to go up to Jerusalem at this great concourse of people, in order to shew his miracles in the capital, which hitherto (as they said) had been concealed in an obscure part of the world: But our Lord, for the present †⁵, would not yield to their importunity, though in a short time he set forward to Jerusalem, but in a very private manner, for fear of awakening the jealousy of his enemies. As he was to pass through the province of Samaria †⁴, he sent some of his apostles to provide him lodgings †⁵ in one of the villages; but the in-

sephus (Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 12.) was the proper word for this capitation tax that was paid to the temple at Jerusalem; whereas the Cæsarean tribute money was the Denarius, a Roman coin, and would have been gathered by the usual officers, the publicans, and not by the persons who are here styled (as by a known title) "they that received the διδάχμα." *Hammond's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

† This piece of money is called *stater*, which amounted to four drachmas or one shekel, in our money about half a crown; and the reason why our Saviour paid for none of the apostles but St Peter only, was, because these receivers demanded it only of those that dwelt at Capernaum, (as our Saviour and St Peter did) leaving the other apostles to pay it in the several places of their abode. *Hammond's* Annotations.

†² The feast of Tabernacles kept in commemoration of the Israelites sojourning in the wilderness, and living in tents for the space of forty years, was one of the three great annual festivals, wherein all the males were obliged to appear at Jerusalem. It began to be celebrated on the fifteenth day of the month Tizri, (which answers in part to our October and September) and is the first month of their civil, and the seventh in their sacred year. *Calmel's* Commentary.

†³ Our Saviour's words upon this occasion are,— "Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet to this feast, for my time is not yet fully come," John vii. 8. Here Grotius takes notice, that the particle *ὄπω*, which answers to *not yet*, was not originally in the text, because (according to St Jerom, contra Pelag. lib. ii.) Porphyry accuses Christ of inconstancy and mutability, in saying, "I go not up to the feast," when afterwards he went; and therefore, he very modestly concludes, that this particle was added by some Christians, to avoid the force of this objection. But why must Christians be accused of altering the Scriptures, merely to save the credit of an heathen, and

professed enemy to Christianity, who might either read negligently, or meet with a deficient or corrupt Latin copy? Especially since it is certain that St Chrysostom reads this particle; that the Syriac and Arabic versions, the Alexandrians and most other ancient manuscripts have it; and that it entirely agrees with the sense both of the preceding and subsequent words. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†⁴ Samaria was a province that lay between Galilee and Judea, and our Saviour's nearest way to Jerusalem was through it. But then it may be questioned, why the Samaritans, who lived at a less distance from Jerusalem than the Galileans, came to be more corrupted in their religion? To which the most probable answer is,—That when the king of Assyria had taken Samaria, and carried away the people captive, 2 Kings xvii. in their room he planted colonies of his own subjects, who were gross idolaters, and more especially in the country of Samaria properly so called, because it was a province which lay in the heart of his new conquest, and might therefore keep the others that depended on it in subjection. Now these idolaters, mixing with the Jews that were left behind, made up a strange medley of religion, which was not quite reformed even in our Saviour's time; and therefore he tells the Samaritan woman, at Jacob's well, "ye worship ye know not what," John iv. 22. whereas the people of Galilee, having few of the Assyrians planted among them, kept their religion more pure and unmixed, and, after the destruction of the temple of Gerizzim by John Hyrcanus, held constant communion with the temple of Jerusalem, even though Gabinius, when he was governor of Syria, had built the Samaritans another; and in relation to this communion it is, that our Saviour tells the same woman (speaking of himself among other Galileans), "we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews."

†⁵ The great multitude that accompanied our Sa-

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habitants, perceiving that he was going to Jerusalem to the feast, * were so uncivil as to refuse him entertainment.

This indignity put upon their master so exasperated James and his brother John, that they desired leave of him (in imitation of † Elias) to command fire down from heaven to consume such inhospitable wretches; but instead of giving any such permission †², our Saviour took care to inform them, that the marks of a Christian were meekness and love, not fury and revenge; that the true end and design of his coming into the world “was, not to destroy, but to save mens lives;” and (that he might prove his doctrine by his practice) when ten leprous persons, who came out of the neighbourhood where he had been so rudely treated, presented themselves with loud cries to him for help, his compassion was as ready to relieve as their necessity to ask; for while they were going to †³ shew themselves to the priest (as he directed them), they all found themselves cured. But see the great ingratitude of human nature! Of the ten who received this miraculous blessing, but one returned to give our Saviour thanks, and he was a Samaritan.

Having thus returned good for evil, and the greatest kindness for the most palpable affront, our Lord proceeded on his journey, and came to another village, where he lodged that night; but before he arrived at Jerusalem he sent out seventy †⁴ of his disciples

viour, and the little or no provision that he usually carried with him, made it necessary for some to go before to make preparation for his reception; and his two apostles, James and John, are supposed to be the persons employed in this capacity, because we find them, in particular, resenting the indignity put upon their master. *Calmet's Commentary*.

* Josephus tells us,—“That as it was an usual thing for the Galileans to travel by the way of Samaria to Jerusalem upon the celebration of their festivals, one time, as they passed by a village called Nais, under the jurisdiction of Samaria, and situated in the great plain, there happened a quarrel between the passengers and villagers, wherein several of the Galileans were slain, and which afterwards occasioned a civil war between these two provinces.” And as it was a common thing for the Samaritans to be angry with the Galileans in general for their passing by their temple to go to Jerusalem; so they might much more resent it in our Saviour, because, as he was accounted a prophet sent from God, by this action he plainly decided the controversy between them and the Jews, touching the place which God had appointed for his religious worship. *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xx. c. 5. Jewish Wars, lib. ii. c. 11. and Whitby's Annotations*.

† The history of Elias (to which the apostles refer us) is doubtless that where, by the direction of God, that prophet called for fire from heaven to destroy those captains and their companies whom king Ahaziah sent out to apprehend him, 2 Kings i. 10, &c. And when these two apostles desired the like judgement upon the village of Samaria, for refusing to receive their master, they verified their name of being sons of thunder, which, upon account of their fiery zeal, their master had before given them, Mark iii. 17.

†² What the two apostles had to allege in behalf of their intended severity against these Samaritans was,—That they were schismatics, and had set up another temple in opposition to that at Jerusalem; that they were heretics, and, together with the worship of the

God of Israel, had mixed that of Pagan idols; that the person whom they had affronted had a character much superior to that of Elias; and that, by an exemplary punishment inflicted upon this village, they might convince the rest of the Samaritans of God's displeasure against their way of worship, and of the Divine mission of their master, who was the true Messiah. But notwithstanding these plausible allegations, our Saviour rebuked them, and in his rebuke gave them to understand, that a spirit of severity towards erroneous persons, in whomsoever it is found, is highly opposite to the calm temper of Christianity, which is “pure and peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good works,” James iii. 17. and that it was repugnant to the end for which he came into the world, which was to discountenance all fierceness and rage, and furious zeal, that occasion so many mischiefs among mankind, and to beget in all his followers such a disposition as exerts itself in “love, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, and meekness,” Gal. v. 22, 23. even to those of the most contrary tempers and persuasion. *Whitby's Annotations*.

†³ By the priests, to whom our Saviour remits these lepers, we are to understand the priests at Jerusalem; for we can hardly suppose that he would send them to those of Mount Gerizzim, when himself, both in his words and practice, had sufficiently declared the illegality of their institution; And therefore, by sending them to Jerusalem, where they were to make their offerings for their cleansing, Lev. xiv. 2, &c. he not only decided the controversy between the Jews and the Samaritans, but gave them likewise to understand, that, before they reached Jerusalem, he would undoubtedly heal them. *Whitby's Annotations and Hammond's Paraphrase*.

†⁴ Those who would have it, that these missionaries were chosen according to the number of the Sanhedrim, imagine, that they were seventy-two, though the round sum only be mentioned; but the general testimony of the ancients is, that they were no more

by † two and two together (in the same manner as he had sent his twelve apostles), in-
to those places which he himself, in a short time, intended to visit, and gave them in-
structions much of the same import with what, upon the like occasion, he had given
his apostles.

The feast of tabernacles always continued eight days, but, for some time after his ar-
rival, our Saviour did not appear publicly, which occasioned no small enquiry, and va-
rious discourses concerning him; some saying that he was a good man, and others, an
impostor, who deluded the people. At length, when every one began to despair of see-
ing him, about the middle of the feast he shewed himself openly, and went and taught
in the temple, to the great admiration of the Jews, who were not a little surprised to
find him, whose education had been destitute of all learning, so perfect in the Scrip-
tures: But, to obviate this exception, he gave them to understand, that the doctrine,
wherein he instructed them, was not of human acquisition, but Divine inspiration; and
that it was a very base and ungenerous thing in them, to endeavour to take away the
life of one, who taught them nothing but what was agreeable to the law of Moses,
whereof they made so loud a profession. In this manner he preached to the people for
the remaining part of the feast; and, †² on the last and greatest day thereof, took oc-

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

than seventy. What their names were is a thing un-
known, only we have an uncertain account of twenty-
eight of them out of Eusebius, Epiphanius, and Pa-
pias; and these are,—Matthias, Mark, Luke, Barna-
bas, Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Par-
menas, Nicholas, Justus, Apelles, Sosthenes, Rufus,
Niger, Cephas, Thaddæus, Aristion, John, Barsabas,
Andronicus, Junius, Silas, Lucius, Manaen, Mnason,
and Ananias. Now, whereas some compare the bi-
shops to the apostles, and these seventy to the presby-
ters of the church, and thence conclude, that these
two orders in the ministry, one inferior to the other,
were instituted by Christ himself, there is this differ-
ence in the matter,—That the LXX received not
their mission (as presbyters do) from bishops, but im-
mediately from our Lord, as the apostles did, and
were sent upon the same errand, and with the same
powers. There is, however, I think, this foundation
for that wherein St Chrysostom and others place the
superiority of bishops over presbyters, viz. that the
power of ordination belongs to them alone: For,
though the commission to preach the Gospel belonged
to the LXX, as well as the twelve apostles, yet the
power of conferring the Holy Ghost by the imposition
of hands was peculiar to the twelve, Acts viii. 14, &c.
and this seems to be the reason why the conferring
of the Holy Ghost, for the use of the ministry (which
is done by the imposition of hands), has perpetually
been esteemed peculiar to those bishops, who, in the
ecclesiastical style, are always called the successors of
the apostles. *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Echard's*
Ecclesiastical History, lib. i. c. 5. [I know not by
whom—if by any person—the apostles were compar-
ed to bishops and the seventy to presbyters; but the
comparison certainly does not hold. During our
Lord's sojourning on earth, he was the only bishop
or overseer of his church, if without absurdity we can
talk of the bishops of a church, which was not yet
built, though he was laying its foundation; and if so,
the apostles ought to be compared to presbyters, and
the seventy to deacons. More than deacons they

certainly were not—if even so much; for if this cata-
logue of twenty-eight of them be correct, we find that
some of them were afterwards constituted deacons by
a new ordination. It was not till after our Lord's
resurrection, however, that the church was built,
when the apostles received a new commission, and
were authorised to confer, by imposition of hands, the
Holy Ghost for the use of the ministry.]

† That they might be of mutual assistance to each
other, and their testimony of more force and validity.
Pool's and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

†³ From the xxixth chapter of the book of Num-
bers we learn; that on the first day of this feast, thir-
teen bullocks were to be offered; on the second,
twelve; on the third, eleven; on the fourth, ten; on
the fifth, nine; on the sixth, eight; on the seventh,
seven; and on the eighth, or last, only one; so that in
regard to the sacrifices, the last day was the least of
all, and yet the Jews accounted it the greatest, be-
cause on that day the king of Israel (as the Talmu-
dists love to speak) was entertained by his own peo-
ple only, and not by those of any other nation. For
their tradition is, that on the first day of the feast,
their ancestors (when the temple was standing) sacri-
ficed seventy bullocks for the seventy nations, (for they
suppose just so many) that are upon the face of the
earth; but on the last day, no more than one, but
that in the name of the people of Israel only. And
as they imagine that an earthly prince may sometimes
(instead of a vast entertainment) desire but a small
collation with his first favourite, that they may have
an opportunity of some familiar converse together; so
upon the account of the intimate friendship with God,
which the Jews on that day thought themselves ad-
mitted to, and the excessive joy which, from the sense
of that friendship, they expressed in all the outward
significations of music, singing, and dancing, the last
day of the feast of Tabernacles was always accounted
the greatest. *Surenhusii Conciliationes in Loca V.*
T. apud. Johan.

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casion from the custom of fetching water from the fountain of Siloah in great pomp, and pouring it upon the altar of burnt-offerings in great abundance, to acquaint them with the future effusion of the Holy Ghost, which he intended to send down upon all those that believed in him.

Those who knew the great hatred which the ruling part of the nation had conceived against him, admired to hear him speak with so much freedom and intrepidity; and those who had seen the number and greatness of his miracles, were by them convinced that he was the true Messiah; but the prejudice of his being a Galilean, and not acknowledged by any of their rulers and learned Rabbies, led others into a contrary persuasion. In the conclusion, officers were sent from the Sanhedrim to apprehend him, but they were so taken with his person and preaching, that they became his disciples; for upon their return, they told the council that they could not execute their office, because † “never man spake like him:” so that the Pharisees, who were part of the assembly, being more enraged at their reason which they gave, than the neglect of their duty, upbraided them for being so easily seduced, and for following the error of an ignorant mob; until Nicodemus, who had formerly conversed with our Lord, and was indeed a secret disciple of his, seeing with what violence his enemies were bent against him, could not forbear interposing in his behalf, by urging the unlawfulness of condemning a person without hearing; so that after some reflections thrown upon him, as a favourer of this Galilean †², who could have no pretensions (as they said) to the title of a prophet, the assembly †³ broke up without proceeding any farther against him, because indeed as yet “his time was not fully come.”

In the evening Jesus repaired to the Mount of Olives, about a mile from the city, and where he sometimes used to pass the night with his apostles. Early next morning he returned to the temple, and as he was teaching the people that were gathered about him, the scribes and Pharisees brought in a woman taken in the act of adultery, and desired him to give his judgment in the case. Their purpose was to find an occasion of accusing him, either of assuming a judicial power if he condemned her, or of nulling the law if he acquitted her: But he (as if he had not much minded them) stooped down, and wrote †⁴ something with his finger upon the dust of the pavement; till, up-

† In these words there are two things remarkable, 1st, The power of Christ's preaching to change the frame and temper of mens spirits; for these men came with hearts alienated from Christ, and with intention to apprehend, and carry him before the chief priests, but returned with great admiration of his excellency and worth. 2dly, The honesty and integrity of these men is very remarkable; for they do not return with a pretence that they feared the multitude, and therefore thought it dangerous to apprehend him, but ingenuously confess, that they could not prevail with themselves to lay violent hands upon a person whose discourses were so excellent and Divine. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†¹ Our Blessed Saviour was neither by birth nor by descent a Galilean; but admitted he had been so, it is a false assertion to say, that no prophet ever arose out of Galilee, since Nahum, though originally of the tribe of Simeon, (according to the testimony of St Jerome, who himself was a Galilean) was born in that province, and in Elcisi, the same town which that father came from; since Jonas was undoubtedly of Gath-hepher, in the tribe of Zebulon, which lay in the land of Galilee, 2 Kings xiv. 25. and in the opinion of several, Malachi was of the same tribe; and born in the city of Sapha: For as there can be no

reason in nature, so is there no declaration of the Divine Will, why a Galilean should not be inspired with the gift of prophecy as well as any other Jew. *Pool's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations, and *Calnet's* Commentary.

†² Some are of opinion, that the party of Sadducees in the council who held the rites and traditions of the Pharisees in great contempt, joined with Nicodemus in not having Christ condemned without a fair hearing, which was no more than what the law required, Deut. i. 16. 17. *Pool's* Annotations.

†³ It is generally agreed, that upon this occasion our Lord wrote some memorable sentence or other, but what that sentence was, the conjectures of learned men have been various. Some have imagined, that it was the reproof against a rigid and uncharitable temper, which occurs in his sermon on the Mount: “Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?” Matth. vii. 3. others, that it was the very words which upon his raising himself up he pronounced to the woman's accusers; “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her,” John viii. 7. and others again, that it might rather be that passage in the Psalmist, “Unto the ungodly, said God, why dost thou preach my laws, and takest my

on their importuning him for an answer, he raised himself up, and said, † "He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone;" and so stooping down, wrote as before. This unexpected answer baffled these insidious accusers, who, thoroughly convinced of their own crimes, retired one by one, and † left the woman alone; so that when our Lord lift up himself again, and found none but the woman standing by him, he asked her what was become of her accusers, and whether any one had condemned her? And when he understood by her answer that no one had, †² "Neither do I condemn thee (said he), go and sin no more."

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark iii.
2. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

After this interruption Jesus returned to the business of instructing the people, and in a sublime discourse opened several great mysteries of Christianity, viz. his Divine mission, his co-equality with the Father, his ability to give eternal life to his followers, and the necessity of believing in him, which would be more evident after his crucifixion; and thence taking occasion to expose the wickedness and degeneracy of those who sought to take away his life, and how unlike to the behaviour of the Sons of God

covenant in thy mouth? Whereas thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief thou consentedst unto him, and hast been partaker with the adulterers, Psal. i. 16, &c. But all this is mere guess-work: and it seems more prudent to say nothing of the actions of our Saviour, when we are not admitted to the reasons of them. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Beausobre's Annotations*.

† The Rabbinical writers tell us, that when a man or woman was convicted of adultery, they were led out to the brow of an hill, with their hands tied behind their backs, where their accusers pushed them down headlong; that if with the fall they were killed, there was no more done to them; but if they were still alive, the same accusers were to roll great stones upon them, and if these did not dispatch them, the company then all took up stones and quite overwhelmed them with them. But we have nothing of all this in the law of Moses. In all the places where he makes mention of this punishment, we only find that the criminal was to be led out of the city, "and stoned with stones till he died," and that "the hands of the witnesses should be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hands of all the people," Deut. xvii. 7. It is in allusion to this passage that our Saviour says, "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone," because it badly becomes those who are guilty, either of the same or greater crimes, to be so very zealous for the punishment of others. This however hinders not but that magistrates, who are entrusted with the execution of the laws, should put them in force against malefactors, even though themselves are not entirely exempt from sin; but still it reminds them that they should execute judgment with compassion and tenderness, and as much moderation as the law will allow them; considering that they themselves are not free from guilt, but as obnoxious to punishment for other sins as those poor creatures are, who have fallen into crimes that are punishable by human judicatories. *Calmet's Commentary* and *Pool's Annotations*.

‡ In the very next words it is said, that the woman "stood in the midst of the people," and our Lord's apostles, who were his constant attendants, were

doubtless not far from him; the meaning therefore of the expression must be, that she was left without any of her accusers, who, out of shame, sneaked away, being convicted in their consciences, that whatever the woman was, they were no proper evidences against her: For, "Non modo accusator, sed ne oburgator quidem ferendus est (says Tully, in Verron. Orat. v.) is, qui, quod in alio reprehendit, in eo ipse reprehenditur." Nor is it to be wondered that, upon this occasion, all the woman's accusers departed from her, since the Jews themselves own that adulteries did multiply under the second temple, when their Rabbins came to permit every one "to have four or five wives, and said that they sinned not if, after the example of the patriarchs, when they saw a beautiful woman they desired to have her." *Just. Mart. Dial.* pag. 363. *Calmet's Commentary* and *Whitby's Annotations*.

†³ Both Selden and Fagius are of opinion, that this woman might come under the number of them whose case is thus represented in the words of Deuteronomy. "If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed to an husband, and a man find her in the city, and he lie with her, then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of the city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife," Deut. xxii. 23, 24. The punishment of stoning, which this law mentions, and the accusers of this woman here insist on, seems to favour this notion; and the indulgence which our Saviour shewed her, looks as if she had suffered some kind of violence, though she was not entirely innocent. Our Saviour, however, could not act in the capacity of a judge, because that was no part of his present ministry: Though therefore he was so far from approving her conduct, that he sufficiently blamed her, in bidding her sin no more, yet was he restrained from pronouncing any sentence of condemnation upon her, because the end of his coming at this time into the world was "not to judge the world but to save it," John xii. 47. *Selden, Uxor. Heb. lib. iii. c. 11.* *Fagius* in Deut. xxii. 22. and *Calmet's Commentary*.

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and Abraham (whom they boasted themselves to be) such causeless and inveterate malice was, he so provoked them with his severe reflections, and especially with the superiority which he claimed above Abraham, that they took up stones to cast at him, had he not miraculously conveyed himself out of their hands.

Before our Lord left Jerusalem the seventy disciples, whom he had sent to preach the Gospel, returned from their journey and ministry greatly rejoicing, because the very devils, by virtue of his name †, were subjected to them; whereupon our Lord promised them still greater success; invested them with power to tread upon the most venomous beasts †², and all the malignant instruments of Satan, without the least harm; and at the same time gave them assurance of a blessing more peculiarly theirs, viz. that their †³ names were recorded in heaven; and so broke out into a rapture of joy, glorifying God for concealing the mysteries of the Gospel from the great and wise, and revealing them to the simple and ignorant, and to his disciples more especially, who, in virtue of that revelation, enjoyed an happiness which many kings and prophets had in vain desired.

Our Lord had scarce ended his discourse, when a doctor of the law stood up, and enquired of him, what was necessary to be done for the attainment of that eternal life †⁴ which he was so very liberal in promising to his followers. Whereupon our Lord remitted him to the law, which, according to the doctor's own account, consisted chiefly in the love of God and the love of our neighbour. But when he demanded farther,

† The power which our Saviour gave to the Seventy, when he sent them out to preach the Gospel, was only that of healing the sick wherever they went, Luke x. 9. but finding that, upon naming their master's name, they were able likewise to cure those that were possessed of devils, this they made the greater matter of their joy, and at their return told it with more pleasure, because it was no part of their commission. It is to be observed, however, that our Lord himself cast out devils by a Divine power residing in himself; his disciples only, in virtue of his name, or by a power derived from him. Seeing then that this power accompanied them in all parts of the world, it was necessary that Christ's presence should be with them every where, and such a presence was a certain proof of his being God. *Whitby's Annotations and Hammond's Paraphrase.*

†² These words seem to have a plain allusion to those in the Psalmist, where, under the metaphor of "treading on the scorpion and basilisk," Psalm xci. 13. God promises the good man a more than common protection from all sorts of dangers and enemies. But there is no reason however, I think, why our Saviour's words may not here be taken in a literal sense, since they agree so well with what he promises all true believers in another place, "they shall take up serpents, (as we find one fastened upon St Paul's hand without doing him any harm, Acts xxviii. 3.), and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them," Mark xvi. 18. *Whitby's Annotations and Calmet's Commentary.*

†³ The words allude to a known custom in well governed cities, where registers are kept of the names of their inhabitants, and do plainly denote the title which believers have to eternal happiness; but by no means an absolute election to it. For as a citizen,

when he misbehaves egregiously, and thereupon becomes infamous, has his name razed out of the city-register, and is himself disfranchised of all his privileges; so we read of some whom Christ threatens "to blot their names out of the book of life," Rev. xxii. 19. For, "as men are written in this book (says St Basil in Isaiah iv. 3.) when they are converted from vice to virtue, so are they blotted out of it when they backslide from virtue to vice." Of the twelve, we read that one was certainly a reprobate; and though it becomes us to hope better of the Seventy, yet our Saviour's words give us no room to think that they were all predestinated to eternal life, since his meaning only is, that his disciples, instead of estimating their happiness from the power of working miracles, should rather make it consist in this,—That he had called, chosen, and separated them from great numbers that would perish; that he had given them the grace of faith and admission to the Christian covenant, but that on themselves it was incumbent, by the preservation of their faith and the practice of good works comporting therewith, "to make their calling and election sure." *Hammond's and Whitby's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

†⁴ The law of Moses does no where expressly promise eternal life to those that observed its precepts. It is wholly taken up with temporal blessings and prosperities; and yet the generality of the Jews were not destitute of the hopes of another life, because their writers, a little before and after the captivity, are very full of it, so that it became the prevailing opinion of the whole nation, and was received by their two principal sects, the Pharisees and Essenes; for as for the Sadducees, who had other notions of the matter, their religion was very little, and their principles purely Epicurean. *Calmet's Commentary.*

what the notion of a neighbour † implied? Our Lord thought proper to answer this question by telling him—"That once upon a time, a certain Jew, as he was travelling in the road between †² Jerusalem and Jericho, was robbed, stripped, barbarously used, and left almost dead with his wounds; that by chance a priest †³ came that way, and saw the poor wretch weltering in his blood, but the horror of the sight did not affect him, he passed along unconcerned; that next came a Levite, but he too was as void of tenderness and compassion as was the priest, though both of them were of the same country with the sufferer; that at last a Samaritan, a stranger, and one abhorred by the Jews, seeing this distressed person, with great compassion came to him, raised his head, recalled his fainting spirits, and closed his gaping wounds with the best medicines †⁴ he had; then, mounting him on his own horse, he gently conveyed him to the first inn, where, at his own cost, he entertained him while he stayed with him, and at his departure †⁵ promised the host to be at whatever expences more should accrue." From which plain narration, the doctor himself †⁶ could not but conclude, that the Samaritan was the neighbour to the person in distress, and, consequently, that the notion of a neighbour comprehended men of all nations and all religions whatever.

From Mattn.
xii. l. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. l.
John v. l. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. l.

As soon as the feast of tabernacles was ended, our Lord departed from Jerusalem, and in the beginning of his journey went to a small village called Bethany, about two miles east of Jerusalem, where he was joyfully received by a woman named Martha, who, with her sister Mary and her brother Lazarus, was highly in favour with him. While Martha was busy in making preparation for his entertainment, her sister Mary

† In our Saviour's time, the Pharisees had restrained the word *neighbour* to signify those of their own nation, their own religion, and their own friends only; and all who differed from them in any of these respects, they indulged the people the liberty to hate, nor would they permit them to extend the least office of common civility to any such. But our Saviour overthrew these false maxims of the Jewish doctors, and reduced the precept of universal charity to its first intention, when, in this parable of the Jew and the Samaritan, he plainly demonstrated, that no difference of nation or religion, no quarrel or resentment, no enmity or alienation of affections, can exempt us from owing any person to be our neighbour. *Whitby's Annotations.*

†² Between Jerusalem and Jericho (which were about seven leagues distant) the road was very infamous for murders and robberies, for in it was a place called *the valley of Adommim*, or of *bloody men*, because of the great quantity of blood that was there spilt; and for this reason it is that our Lord lays the scene of his parable in this place. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†³ To make the description more lively, our Saviour instances in two men, a priest and a Levite, who took no pity of this Jew in distress, though they were of the same religion and country, nay, though they were the ministers and teachers of the religion which he professed, and might therefore be presumed, even in virtue of their office and education, to have more extensive notions, and hearts more capable of tender impressions than the ruder vulgar: And for the same reason; he introduces a Samaritan as acting a different part, and taking all imaginable care of this wounded Jew, though between Jews and Samaritans there was a most inveterate hatred.

†⁴ The words in the text are, "pouring in wine and oil;" Oil, to ease and assuage the pain; and wine, to cleanse and heal the wound: And these things the good Samaritan had about him, because the inns in the eastern countries (even as it is still) afforded nothing but barely house-room; and therefore the custom was for the traveller to carry all kinds of necessaries, both for his bed and board, along with him. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†⁵ The words in the text are,—"when he departed he took out two pence," Luke x. 35. The *δηνάριον*, which we render a *penny*, was a kind of Roman coin, much about seven pence half-penny of our money. In the New Testament (for it never occurs in the Old) it is usually put for a piece of money in general, i. e. for a shekel, which was the most common coin among the Jews before they became subject to the Greeks and Romans; so that in this sense, what the Samaritan gave the host amounted to five shillings or thereabout, which is more consistent with the rest of his character, than that he should leave so small a matter behind him. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†⁶ Had our Saviour propounded the parable in this manner,—That a certain Samaritan fell among thieves, and that a priest and a Levite passed by without offering him any help, this doctor of the law might have replied, that they did nothing but right, because the Samaritan was no neighbour of theirs: But now, as he makes a Jew the subject of the parable, and the object of the Samaritan's compassion, he draws him in to acknowledge the voice of nature, which declares, that every man is neighbour to his fellow creature, and that the law of Moses has not annulled, but perfected the law of nature, by commanding us to "love our neighbour as ourselves," Levit. xix. 18. *Calmet's Commentary.*

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sat with the company listening to his instructions ; and when Martha complained to him that her sister had left the whole burden of the business upon her, and thereupon desired him to send her to her assistance, our Lord commended Mary's choice, and, though he did not slight Martha's civility, yet her sister's devoutness and attention to his doctrine, † which was one thing chiefly necessary, he preferred before it.

Upon his return to Galilee, as he was one day praying with his disciples in a private place, †² they, taking it into consideration how necessary it was for them to be directed in the right performance of that duty, desired of him to compose a form of prayer for their use, as the Baptist had done for his disciples : whereupon he not only gave them the same excellent form, called the Lord's Prayer, which he had given them above eighteen months before in his sermon on the Mount, but encouraged them likewise, from the consideration of God's goodness and fatherly affection (far more indulgent to his children than any earthly parents were to theirs) to be constant in their petitions to him, with fervour †³, importunity, and an indefatigable perseverance, as the likeliest way to obtain a gracious answer to them.

Not long after this, upon our Lord's curing a demoniac that was dumb, the Pharisees renewed their old senseless cavil of his ejecting devils by Beelzebub, which he confuted by the same arguments he had formerly used upon that account ; and when they again demanded of him a sign from heaven, he again made them the same reply. Nay, not only so, but when he was invited to dinner one day by a certain person of that sect, who was not a little offended at his sitting down to meat without washing his hands, he took occasion from thence to inveigh very severely against their ridiculous superstition, in affecting outward neatness in their manner of living, while they neglected to cleanse their souls from internal pollutions. And so, proceeding to reproach both them and the scribes, the teachers of the law, with their pride and prevarication, their hypocrisy and spirit of persecution, he so exasperated them, that they used all possible methods to ensnare him in his speech, and to find some accusation against him, whereby they might destroy him.

One of the company, however, seeing with what authority he reprov'd and determined among the people, desired of him †⁴ to arbitrate between him and his brother, con-

† Interpreters have given themselves some trouble in determining what that one thing is which our Saviour accounts needful. Some of the ancients are of opinion, that our Lord, in this expression, told Martha, that one dish was enough. But, besides the lowness of the sense, the great company that attended our Lord, seventy disciples and twelve apostles, to be sure, if no more, shews the incongruousness of it. Others will have this one thing needful to be a life of meditation and contemplation, which Mary had all along addicted herself to ; but her choosing to take the advantage of our Saviour's company, to hear him for an hour or two, rather than prepare a supper for him, is not foundation enough for this conjecture ; and therefore we cannot but think, that the most general interpretation, concerning the care of the soul with reference to eternity, is the best. *Pool's Annotations.*

†² These disciples must have been some of the LXX. who were not present when our Lord delivered his Sermon on the Mount, wherein he first of all prescribed to his apostles this form of prayer. *Beausobre's Annotations.*

†³ The word *εὐαδία* properly signifies *impudence*, and might here be used in conformity to that saying of the Jews : " The impudent man overcomes the

modest and the bashful, how much more God, who is goodness itself." *Whitby's Annotations.*

†⁴ The practice among the Jews of referring civil matters to ecclesiastical persons, as judges, began in the captivity of Babylon, when, by this means, the Jews avoided the bringing their differences before heathen judges. Under the dominion of the Romans they were indulged a greater liberty, and had civil courts made up of persons of their own religion. In cases of private difference between man and man, it was usual to make either the consistory of three, or some others chosen by the contending parties, arbitrators. Whether both these brothers had agreed to refer their difference to our Lord's determination, or this one of them only desired him to interpose his authority, if not to enjoin, at least to persuade his brother to come to an accommodation, it is difficult to say, because the Scripture is silent : But this we may observe, that the ordinary rule of inheritance among the Jews was,—for the eldest son to have a double portion of his father's estate, and the rest to be divided equally among the other children ; but in what came by the mother, the eldest had no prerogative above the rest ;—the division among them was equal. Whatever then the controversy between these brothers was, our Saviour might very justly refuse to

cerning an estate which had lately fallen to them: But this office he chose to decline, and thence took occasion to preach against covetousness, or placing our felicity in worldly possessions; and to enforce this, he propounded the parable of a certain rich man, who, when he had acquired estate enough, proposed to indulge himself in voluptuousness, but was sadly disappointed by the intervention of a sudden death. He therefore exhorted his disciples not to be too anxious about the things of this life, but to cast their care upon God's Providence, who, having promised them a kingdom in heaven, would not fail of supplying them with what was necessary here. He exhorted them to charity, to watchfulness, to preparation against the day of judgment, or the arrest of death, and (under the emblem of stewards or governors in great mens houses) recommended gentleness and temperance, and cautioned them against indulging themselves in any kind of excess, upon the confidence of their Lord's absence or delay.

While he was thus discoursing to his disciples, news was brought him of * the massacre which Pilate had caused to be made of some Galileans, while they were offering their sacrifices at the altar; and the consequence which he drew from thence (as well as from another sad accident that had lately happened in Jerusalem, where the fall of the tower of Siloam † had destroyed no less than eighteen persons) was, not that these sufferers were greater sinners than their neighbours, but that their sufferings were intended to lead others to repentance, which, if they did not, in all probability they would meet with the like or worse judgments *²: And then, to engage them all to a speedy repentance, he set forth the patience of the Almighty towards them in the parable of a fig-tree, which the master of the vineyard ordered to be cut down, because for three years †² it had bore no fruit; but upon the gardener's promising to use a more than

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23 Luke vi. 1.
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Matth. xviii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
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intermeddle in it, and that not only because it was inconsistent with his design of coming into the world, which was to promote mens spiritual, rather than their temporal interests, but because it might probably have drawn upon him the envy and calumny of the Jewish rulers, who might be apt to say, that he took upon him an office to which he had no call, in prejudice to them who were legally appointed to do it. *Pool's* and *Whitby's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

* The general opinion is,—that this piece of history relates to the sedition which Judas Gaulonites raised against the Roman government in Judea, when he and one Sadducus, a Pharisee, possessed the people with a notion, "That taxes were a badge of their slavery; that they ought to acknowledge no sovereign but God himself; nor pay any tribute but to his temple." It was in Galilee, very probably, where this Judas first broached these sentiments, and there acquired such a multitude of followers and abettors, as made Josephus call him Galilæus as well as Gaulonites, *Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 2.* Nay, all his followers in general, though they were of different provinces by birth, obtained the same name. But when they came to Jerusalem, at one of the great festivals, and began to spread these seditious notions against Cæsar, Pilate, who was then the Roman governor, having had intelligence of it, caused a considerable number of them to be slain in the temple while they were sacrificing. *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

† The fountain of Siloam rose at the foot of the wall of the east part of the city of Jerusalem. The tower, called after its name, was doubtless built upon the wall, not far from it; and, being now become an-

cient, might fall upon such a number of people, either passing by or standing under it. But how this accident came to pass we have no manner of certainty, because this passage in St Luke is the only place where we find any mention made of this piece of history. *Calmet's* Commentary.

*² To verify this prediction of our Saviour's upon the impenitent Jews, we may remember what Josephus has told us of them, viz. that, under the government of Cumanus, twenty thousand of them were destroyed about the temple, *Antiq. lib. xx. c. 4.* That, upon the admission of the Idumæans into the city, eight thousand and five hundred of the high priest's party were slain, insomuch that there "was a flood of blood quite round the temple," *de Bello Jud. lib. iv. c. 7.* That upon the threefold faction that happened in Jerusalem, before the siege of the Romans, the temple was "everywhere polluted with slaughter; the priests were slain in the exercise of their function; many who came to worship fell before their sacrifices; and the dead bodies of strangers and natives were promiscuously blended together, and sprinkled the altar with their blood," *de Bello Jud. lib. vi. c. 1.* and that, upon the Romans taking the city and temple, "mountains of dead bodies were piled up about the altar; streams of blood ran down the steps of the temple; several were destroyed by the fall of towers; and others "choaked in the sultry ruins of the galleries over the porches, *de Bello Jud. lib. vii. c. 10.*

†² Some of the ancients are of opinion, that by these three years we are to understand the three dispensations under which mankind have lived, viz. under the natural law, from the beginning of the world

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ordinary care and diligence about it, he was prevailed on to let it stand one year longer, but with this determination, that if it still continued unfruitful, he would not then fail to cut it down.

Every Sabbath day our Lord's custom was to preach in one of the Jewish synagogues; and while he was thus employed, he observed a woman, who, for the space of eighteen years, had laboured under a spirit of infirmity, which bowed down her body so that she was not able to lift herself up. Here was a proper object for his compassion and power to exert themselves; and therefore calling the woman to him, he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she became straight, and glorified God. At this the ruler of the synagogue † became so very envious and displeased, that he told the people,—There were six days in the week allowed by God for labour, and that on those they might come for cure, but not on the Sabbath, which was a day appointed for rest. But our Lord soon made him ashamed of his hypocrisy, ‡ by an argument drawn from their own practice of loosing an ox or an ass from the stall on the Sabbath-day, and leading them away to watering; and much more then might he be permitted to cure, on that day, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan for so many years had afflicted with a sore disease. Whereupon his adversaries were silenced, but the people were all glad and rejoiced at his glorious actions.

The feast of dedication †³ was now approaching, when, after several removals, our Lord repaired again to Jerusalem, and as he was walking in the streets on the Sabbath-day †⁴, he saw a poor man that was blind from his very birth. Upon his calling the

to the time of Moses; under the written law, from Moses to Jesus Christ; and under the evangelical law, from Jesus Christ to the end of the world. Others rather mean by them the three kinds of government under which the Jews had lived, viz. the government of judges, from Joshua to Saul; the government of kings, from Saul to the Babylonish captivity; and the government of high priests, from the captivity to the time of Jesus Christ. But these explications are a little too arbitrary; nor will the three years of our Saviour's preaching among the Jews come up to the point, because the Jews were not destroyed the next year, (as the barren fig-tree was to be cut down) but forty years after our Lord's ascension. All that is meant by the expression therefore is, that God gave them all the time and all the means that could be desired, to make them inexcusable; and the term of three years seems rather to be mentioned, because the fruit of some fig-trees comes not to maturity till the third year. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*.

† In every synagogue there was a considerable number of doctors of the law, who, in the Gospel, are frequently called rulers or governors, and over these there was usually one chief president. But the person here seems not to have been the chief president, but one of the subordinate rulers, because we find him not addressing himself directly to Christ, (which, not improbably, had he been the president, he would have taken courage to do) but only to the people in general, though by them he obliquely struck at our Saviour. *Beausobre's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

†³ Our Saviour declared this ruler of the synagogue to be an hypocrite, partly because he placed his holiness in the observation of the ritual precepts of the law, (such as bodily rest on the Sabbath-day) to the

disparagement of the works of mercy, and other great matters of eternal obligation; and partly because he pretended to a great zeal for the performance of God's commands, when all the while he was rather acted by a malevolent envy to the glory of Christ, which he, to whom his heart was open, perfectly knew. *Whitby's Annotations*.

†³ When Judas Maccabæus had cleansed the temple, which had been polluted by Antiochus Epiphanes, he again dedicated the altar, (1 Maccab. iv. 59. and 2 Maccab. x. 8.) and this is supposed to be the dedication, in memory of which the Jews continued to celebrate a feast, which fell out in the winter, in the month Cisleu, between the 13th and 14th of our November; and being the same, in all probability, with what in the Gospel is called τὰ ἑσθαινια, was honoured and approved by our Saviour's presence, though but of human institution. *Whitby's Annotations*, *Hammond's Paraphrase*, and *Echard's Ecclesiastical History*, lib. i. c. 5.

† It has been observed before, that our Saviour made choice of the Sabbath-day, as a day wherein he did many of his mighty works. It was on this day that he cured the impotent man, who lay at the pool of Bethesda, John v. 10. On this day that he healed him who had the withered hand, Matth. xii. 10. and now on this day likewise that he gave sight to the man who was born blind, John ix. 14. and possibly he might chuse this, because it was the day whereon he ordinarily preached that heavenly doctrine which he confirmed by these miraculous works; or perhaps that he might instruct the Jews (if they would have received instruction) in the right observation of the Sabbath, and arm his disciples against that pernicious doctrine of the Pharisees, viz. that it was not lawful to do good or perform works of mercy and compassion on that day. *Pool's* and *Whitby's Annotations*.

man to him, his disciples asked him, whether it was the * man's own or his parents sin that had brought that calamity upon him? But his blindness, as he told them, was not sent for a punishment of any one's sin, but † for the greater manifestation of God's glory; and so spitting upon the ground, he made some clay, and having anointed his eyes therewith, he ‡ sent him to wash them in the pool of Siloam; which accordingly he did, and returned with such perfect eye-sight, that his neighbours were amazed, and began to question whether he was the same man that used to sit begging, until he assured them that he was the very person, and, to satisfy them farther, not only told them who his physician was, but in what manner his cure was effected.

Various were the censures and opinions of men upon this occasion. The Pharisees, to diminish the credit of the miracle, said that Jesus could not be a prophet sent from God, † because he violated the Sabbath; but others again replied, that no impostor could be permitted to work such miracles, as had apparently the finger of God in them. Those who were averse to believe the miracle, or in hopes of making the thing look intricate, sent for the parents of the man that was cured, and asked them these three questions. Whether he was their son? Whether he was born blind? And whether they knew how, and by whom he was cured? To the two first questions they answered directly, that he was their son, and was born blind; but, as to the last, they referred them to him, who (as they told them) was of age to answer for himself; not daring to say any more for fear of the Sanhedrim, who had made an order ‡ to excommuni-

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

* What the disciples might mean by the sin of the blind man's parents is no hard matter to solve, considering the strict prohibition in the law, Levit. xx. 18. of not coming near a menstruous woman, which was thought to have so ill an influence upon the child, as to make it obnoxious to leprosy or mutilation, and might, consequently, be the cause of this person's blindness: But what we are to understand by his own sin before he was born, is not so easy to be determined. That it cannot relate to the original sin which he brought into the world with him, is evident, because all mankind (our Lord only excepted) are equally guilty of this; nor does this entail upon them any corporeal imperfection: And therefore the sin here intended must be something special and personal. Now, whoever considers that the opinion of the Platonists and Pythagoreans concerning the pre-existence of souls, their transmigration from one body to another, and being sent into bodies better or worse, according to their merit or demerit, had obtained among the Jews, and more especially among the Pharisees, need not much wonder to find our Lord's disciples infected with it, or at least desirous to know their master's sentiments about it. The author of the Book of Wisdom, where, speaking of himself, he tells us, "that, being good, he came into a body undefiled," i. e. free from any notable infirmity, chap. viii. 20. gives countenance to this doctrine; and in the writings of Philo, (de Gigant. p. 285. et de Somniis, p. 586.) and of Josephus, (de Bello Jud. lib. ii. c. 12.) we have it confirmed to us: And therefore the disciples may well be supposed to enquire here, whether our Lord allowed of the prevailing notion, viz. That the soul of this man might be put into this imperfect body, for the punishment of what he had done, either in or out of the body, in a pre-existent state. *Whitby's and Hammond's Annotations, and*

Calmel's Commentary.

† It must not be thought that God did any ways actively concur to make this man blind, though, in his wisdom, he thought fit to leave this imperfection in the plastic matter whereof he was formed unrectified, that thereby he might shew his miraculous power in giving sight to such an one, for the confirmation of Christ's doctrine; thereby display his goodness, in illuminating both the soul and body of this man at once; and thereby give all others, who beheld this miraculous cure, a powerful motive to believe. *Whitby's Annotations.*

‡ We read of nothing medicinal in this water, only our Lord was pleased to send the blind man to wash his eyes here, as a probation of his faith and obedience, in the same manner as of old Naaman the Syrian was sent to wash in the river Jordan, 2 Kings v. 10. *Pool's Annotations.*

† And yet they themselves acknowledge, that a prophet might do and command things contrary to the rest required by the Sabbath, which they also prove by the example of Joshua, who commanded that "the ark should be carried round Jericho, the armed men going before and after it seven days," one of which must be the Sabbath, Josh. vi. How then could that which prophets, by the known principles of the Jews, were allowed to do, prove that Jesus was no prophet, especially if we consider, that by these actions of mercy and goodness he did not indeed violate the rest of the Sabbath, but only their corrupt traditions concerning it. *Whitby's Annotations.*

† The general opinion is, that among the Jews there were three kinds of excommunication; that the first was called *niddui*, that is to say, *separation*, which lasted for thirty days, and separated the person from the use of all things holy: The second was called

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tate any person who should acknowledge Jesus to be Christ. Him therefore they began to examine; and to draw him from the good opinion he had conceived of his physician, bid him ascribe the glory of his cure wholly to God, and not to look upon Jesus with any veneration, who was a sinner and Sabbath-breaker, and consequently could not come from God. To which the man boldly replied, "That it was very unaccountable that they should not perceive from whence the man was, whom God had endued with such a miraculous power of opening the eyes of one born blind, † a thing that was never heard of before since the world began; and that since it was a certain truth || that God heareth not sinners, if he were not sent, and empowered by God, he could never do such wonderful cures as these." This provoked them so highly, that they first upbraided him with his former blindness, as a character of some extraordinary ill in him, and then cast him out of the synagogue with disgrace; but Jesus shortly after met him, and received him into his own church. He declared himself to him that he was the Messiah; and the poor man, believing on him, immediately fell down prostrate at his feet, and adored him.

After that our Lord had received the poor man's homage, he continued his discourse, and under the allegory of a †² shepherd and his sheep, proved the Pharisees to be no

cherem, or *execration*, which excluded the person from the synagogue, and deprived him of all civil commerce: And the third *shammatha*, or *excision*, which removed him from all hopes of returning to the synagogue any more. But Selden (*de Synedr. Hebr.*) maintains, that these three terms, *niddui*, *cherem*, and *shammatha*, are sometimes synonymous, and that the Jews, properly speaking, never had more than two sorts of excommunication, the greater and the less; though most are agreed that it was the greater sort of excommunication which the Sanhedrim threatened to any one that should confess that Jesus was the Christ, because the parents of the blind man were so fearful of it that they durst not speak out. *Calmet's Dictionary* under the word *Excommunication*.

† They who lose their sight by a disease may be cured; but no man, no not Moses, or any of the prophets, ever did, or ever could, without the assistance of a Divine power, give sight to one born blind; for which reason the Jews reckon this among the signs of the Messiah, that he "should open the eyes of the blind." *Whitby's Annotations*.

|| But "doth not God hear sinners?" Then whom can he hear, since no man liveth and committeth not sin against God? It is true indeed; but then the sinners which the poor man may be supposed here to mean, are not those who become such through ignorance, weakness, or human infirmity, but such notorious and presumptuous sinners as go on in their impieties with an high hand and an hardened heart, of whom the Spirit of God declares, "When they spread forth their hands I will hide myself from them, and when they make many prayers I will not hear," *Isa. i. 15*. The maxim however is here to be understood not in a general, but restrained sense, viz. that God useth not to honour notorious and flagitious sinners (especially when they pretend to come with a message from him) by giving them a power to work miracles, in order to confirm the truth of what they say. For this is the force of the poor man's argu-

ment,—That Christ could not be such a notorious sinner as he was represented to him, because it was inconsistent with the attributes of God, to honour such persons with his presence and assistance, in doing such works as none could do without a Divine power committed to them. *Pool's Annotations*.

†² That this allusion was very proper and pertinent with regard to the persons to whom our Saviour addressed his discourse, the condition and custom of that country may convince us. For the greatest part of the wealth and improvement there consisted in sheep; and the examples of Jacob and David in particular, are proofs that the keeping of these was not usually committed to servants and strangers, (as it is among us), but to men of the greatest quality and substance. The children of the family, nay, the masters and owners themselves, made it their business, and esteemed the looking to their flocks a care and employment in no case below them. Hence probably came the frequent metaphor of styling kings the shepherds of their people. Hence the ancient prophets describe the Messiah in the character of a shepherd; and our Blessed Saviour, to shew that he was the person intended by the prophets, applies the same character to himself, thereby to represent his government of the church, and tender concern for mankind: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom; shall seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away; shall bind up that which was broken, and strengthen that which was sick, and gently lead those which were with young," *Isaiah xl. 11.* and *Ezekiel xxxiv. 16.* all lively emblems of our Lord's pastoral care, and of the various methods which he hath employed to accommodate his dispensations to our wants, in order to promote our eternal salvation. And as the character of a shepherd did well become our gracious Saviour, so there is something in the very nature and disposition of sheep (which appears so innocent and inoffensive, so peaceable and gentle, so patient and submissive, so honest

better than blind guides, "nay, than thieves and robbers, who had † climbed up into the sheepfold," or made themselves rulers and governors in God's church without any proper commission from him. Upon the same ground he condemned all those false christs †², who before him had usurped the title of the Messiah, and asserted his own right to it by an argument, that no other shepherd durst produce, viz. "his laying down his life for his sheep" ‖, which were to consist of Gentiles †³ as well as Jews, and all together make up one flock.

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1 to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke xi. 37. John vii. 1.

Before the conclusion of the feast, as he was walking in Solomon's porch †⁴, several

and undesigning), as carries a near resemblance to that plainness and probity, that modesty and humility, that quietness and submission, which are indeed the first elements of the Christian religion, as well as the qualifications requisite to the reception of it. It is to be observed, however, that as the shepherd's art in managing his sheep (in the eastern countries) was different from what is among us, (to which purpose we read of his going before, leading, and calling his sheep, and of their following, and knowing his voice, whereas our shepherds go after and drive their sheep); so these several expressions do, in the moral, denote our Lord's receiving into the number of Christians all those humble and obedient souls that come to him in the spirit of meekness, not in the clothing, but in the real qualities, of his sheep, and making provision for their growth in grace and improvement in all virtue and godliness of living. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii. and *Hammond's* Annotations.

† According to the primary institution of God, it was the proper province of the sons of Levi "to teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord had spoken unto them by the hand of Moses," Levit. x. 11. and therefore it was required that "the priest's lips should preserve knowledge, and the people seek his law at their mouths," Mal. ii. 4. 7. But (however it came about) no sooner did their traditions grow in esteem, than the scribes and Pharisees, not only took upon them to be the guides and teachers of the people, but maintained likewise, that others were to receive authority to teach from their commission and ordination to that office; though we nowhere find that they received any such authority from God; for which reason our Saviour represents them as a "plantation which his Father had not planted, Matth. xv. 13. and bids his disciples beware of their doctrine, Matth. xvi. 12. because "they taught for doctrines of God the commandments of men, and made void the commandments of God by their traditions," Matth. xv. 6. 9. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†³ In several of the Greek copies, as well as the Syriac, Persian, and Gothic, the words before me (for our Saviour in the text speaks in his own person) are omitted; and some critics are of opinion, that this omission was early, because the Manichees (according to Theophylact) made no scruple to infer from hence, that the prophets of the Old Testament had not their mission from God. Our Saviour, however, in several places where he quotes them, has sufficiently established the authority of the prophets; and by this passage means no more than that all those who before him had taken upon them the title and quality of the Messiah (such as Theudas and Judas Gallilæus, where-

of we find mention Acts v. 36, 37.) were thieves and robbers, because they usurped a character which they had no right to; and that all before him, who either had not their commission from God, or could not prove it by extraordinary miracles (such as the authors of the Rabbinical traditions, and of all the other reigning sects among the Jews), were far from being the true shepherds of God's people. *Calmet's* Commentary.

‖ His sheep are here supposed by some to be his elect and peculiar friends; and thence they infer, that Christ laid down his life for them only. Now if we respect the council of God, and the design of Jesus Christ, nothing is more certain than that he gave himself "a ransom for all," 1 Tim. ii. 6. and "tasted death for every man," Heb. ii. 9. and "was a propitiation for the sins of the whole world," 1 John ii. 2. but then, because the world can no otherwise lay hold on the benefits of this propitiation than by believing, and being obedient to the voice of this Shepherd, he therefore is said to do this more eminently for his sheep. The apostle, I think, has determined the whole controversy in a few words,—“He died for all, that they who live might not live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them,” 2 Cor. v. 15. so that if any perish, it is not because he died not for them, but because they will not perform the conditions required to make his death efficacious to them; they will not "live unto him who died for them." *Whitby's* Annotations.

†³ These our Saviour calls "his other sheep," John x. 16. by way of anticipation, because he foreknew that many of them (when once his Gospel came to be tendered to them) would give it a ready reception, be converted, and baptised; and because the ceremonial law (which was the partition wall between the Jews and Gentiles) was shortly to be broken down, and the Gentiles admitted to the same privileges with the Jews that believed in his name. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†⁴ This porch consisted of some stately cloisters on the east side of the temple, and not far from the court of the Gentiles. It was called Solomon's, either to preserve the memory of that great prince, or because it was built according to the model of that which he erected, 1 Kings vi. 3. for both in the temple which Zerubbabel, and in that which Herod rebuilt, the plan of Solomon's was chiefly observed, though some variations might be allowed of: and in this porch our Saviour was walking, because at this time it was winter, and here he found a cover from the injuries of the weather; whereas, in the summer season, it was customary with the Jews to walk in the

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of the Jews came and required him to tell them (in positive terms) whether he was the Messiah or not : To which his answer was, that he had already sufficiently informed them of that, but to no effect ; that the miracles which he wrought in his Father's name, were a full evidence of his mission ; that the reason † why they believed him not, was because they were not of a disposition proper for his sheep ; that to such as were his sheep and followed him, he would give eternal life : and that none could pull them out of his or his Father's hands, because he and his Father were one †. Upon this last expression the Jews concluded him to be a blasphemer, and were going to stone him ; and though he reminded them of the many good actions he had done for them in his Father's name, and endeavoured to apologize for his calling himself the Son of God, (even because in Scripture we find judges and magistrates frequently so styled, and much more then might he, who was consecrated and sent by God, assume that title) yet all this would not appease their rage, so that he was forced to leave the city, and went thence over Jordan to Bethabara, where John had formerly baptized ; where great multitudes resorted to him, both to hear his instructions, and to be healed of their diseases ; and where he made many disciples, because the place put the people in mind, that whatever John had reported of him was true.

While he continued in these parts, a certain person put a curious question to him, †² concerning the number of those that should be saved : Whereupon he took occasion to admonish his hearers, " That they ought to use their utmost endeavours to enter in at the strait gate * of salvation, because the number of those who should not attain it

open courts of the temple. *Echard's Ecclesiastical history*, lib. i. c. 5. *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

‡ Some are of opinion, that the words in the text *ὅτι γὰρ*, which we render *because*, are not rational, or do not render a reason for these people's infidelity, but only intimate that their infidelity was consequential to their not being his sheep ; or in other words, that they could not believe because they were not elected. But to obviate this, we must observe, that the reason which our Lord here assigns for this defect of faith is doubtless such as made it a great crime in them ; for sure that must be such for which they were to " die in their sins," John viii. 24. It is therefore certain, that this unbelief cannot be resolved into any natural defect of knowledge on their part, nor any act of reprobation on God's part, but purely to the want of a teachable and well-disposed mind. For, were it the same thing to be one of Christ's sheep, and to be predestinate to faith and salvation, the import of our Saviour's words must be this :—" Ye therefore believe not, because ye are not of the number of the elect, but of those whom God hath from eternity rejected." Now by this account of the matter, our Saviour would not have accused, but excused the infidelity of the Jews ; and they, with as good reason, might have replied to him,—“ We therefore believe not, because God, by his act of reprobation, hath shut the door of faith against us, and so our infidelity is not to be imputed to us, but God.” *Whitby's Annotations*.

† That is, one in essence and nature ; one in authority and power, and not barely one in will and consent : and that this is the genuine signification of the words appears, 1st, From the original text, where it is not said, I and my Father are one *ἐγώ*, person, in the masculine gender, but *ἐν*, one thing in the neuter.

Now if that thing be not the Divine Being, they cannot be one ; for since the Father is confessed to be God, the Son cannot be one thing with the Father if he be not God too. 2dly, It appears from the context, where our Saviour, having in the preceding verses ascribed the preservation of his sheep to the power of his Father, " None is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands," John x. 29. ascribes the same also to his own power, " Neither shall any pluck them out of my hand," ver. 28. plainly intimating, that his sheep were equally safe in his own hand as in his Father's, because, says he, " I and my Father are one," ver. 30. And, 3dly, It appears from the verses which immediately follow ; for when the Jews took up stones to stone him as guilty of blasphemy, because he made himself God, he does not evade the charge by saying, that he only conspired with the will of God, as all true prophets did, but appealed to the works which he performed by the power of the Father residing in him, which plainly carries it to an unity of power not of will only ; and then St Chrysostom's inference is undeniable, that " if the power be the same, the essence also is the same." *Whitby's Annotations*.

†² The man who proposed this question to our Saviour, had doubtless in his thoughts the common opinion of the Jews, that all Israelites (how much soever they may suffer in this) might have their portion in the world to come ; but this was a question of too much needless curiosity for our Saviour to answer, because it is no part of our concern how many shall be saved ; but only how, and by what means, we are to work out our own salvation : And therefore he took occasion from hence to instruct the man (and in him all others) in what might be of much more substantial benefit to him. *Whitby's Annotations*.

* This expression of our Blessed Saviour's, whether it was borrowed from the heathen sages or no, is ex-

would be large; that they ought to do it with all expedition, because, when once the gate was shut, and the means of salvation withdrawn, all pretences of having heard the glad tidings of the Gospel, and of having been conversant with him upon earth, would gain them no admittance; that all workers of iniquity should be utterly excluded; and therefore the Jews, in particular, would have cause to lament, when they should see many heathens, from all parts of the earth, possessed of the glories of heaven, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the ancient prophets, while themselves (who were the heirs of the kingdom) should be thrust out, and ‘so made the last, who were once the first.’”

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

As he was discoursing in this manner, some of the Pharisees, who could no longer bear with patience the power and authority which he had gained among the people, in hopes of getting rid of him, || came and suggested the danger he was in from Herod Antipas, so long as he continued in Galilee, which was part of his dominions: but far from betraying any fear upon such information, he let the Pharisees know, that, having but a few days longer to live, he was determined to devote them to the relief of the distressed, the curing diseases, and casting out devils; and as to Herod's † subtilty and designs against his life, they were altogether superfluous, because he foreknew that he was to suffer death at Jerusalem †², which was the place appointed (as it were)

tremely like them: For Cebes tells us, that at the first entrance upon a course of virtue there is a little gate; that after we have passed this gate, there is a narrow ascent; and that the way following is rough and rugged, because it is not much frequented; but that, after we have got up to the top of the hill, the rest is smooth and easy, free from all obstructions, and leading to the regions of felicity. Nay, Hesiod, who was much older than Cebes, has given us the same description of the paths of virtue:

Μακρὸς δὲ καὶ ὄρεσις οἶμος ἐπ' αὐτὴν,
καὶ τεχνὺς τὸ πρῶτον ἐπὶν δ' εἰς ἄκρον ἴκηαι
Ῥηϊδίη δ' ἥπαιτα πίλει, χαλεπὴ φρεῖ ἰούσα.

Oper. et Dier. Lib. i. Lin. 288.

And hence we may perceive, to our comfort, that though the ways of virtue and religion are not, at their first entrance, so very agreeable, yet, in process of time, they will be found to be “ways of pleasantness, Christ's yoke easy, and his commandments not grievous.” *Cebetis* Tab. *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Whitby's* Annotations.

|| But whether they came upon their own account, or by the instigation of Herod, is the question.—If they came upon their own account, it is certain that they came not out of any kindness to our Saviour; because the whole history of the Gospel informs us, that they were far from having any affection for him, and therefore they must come with a design, either to scare him out of Galilee, where he had been too popular for them, or to drive him into a trap which they had laid for him in Judea. This seems to be a genuine interpretation enough of the sense of the evangelist; and therefore in our history we have followed it: But still it seems not improbable, that, considering the present circumstances Herod was under, he might send these messengers to our Saviour. He had but lately gained himself no good reputation among the Jews by murdering John, whom all the

world looked upon as a prophet: And therefore, seeing that our Saviour excelled John, especially in the fame and renown of his miracles, he was unwilling to augment the odium which already lay upon him, by any fresh acts of violence to a person that was reputed a prophet much superior to the Baptist whom he had slain: He had got a notion too, that the Baptist, at least the soul of the Baptist in another body, was risen from the dead, and what the effect of his ghost's haunting his dominions might be, he could not tell; and therefore he might think it convenient to put these Pharisees upon some expedient to get our Saviour (whom possibly he might take for John revived) removed farther from him. However this be, it is certain, that either he or the Pharisees, or both, had a mind to have him gone somewhere else; and that for this purpose the message was brought him. *Pool's* Annotations.

† The subtilty of that prince is implied in the answer which our Saviour makes to the Pharisees, and which looks indeed as if they had been sent from him, “Go, tell that fox,” Luke xiii. 32. The expression however may be taken either in a mild or a harsher sense. If a mild, it may denote that exquisite policy wherewith this prince conducted his affairs all his lifetime, siding sometimes with the Jews, sometimes with the Romans, sometimes with the Pharisees, and sometimes with the Sadducees, just as it suited his interest: but, suppose it be taken in a harsh sense, it will nowise affect our Saviour's character, nor infringe the command of not “speaking evil of the ruler of the people,” since our Lord was a prophet sent from God, and the office of a prophet is, not to spare kings when they reprove their offences, Jer. i. 15. *Whitby's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

†² Some are of opinion, that, because the Jews had referred to the Sanhedrim, which sat at Jerusalem, the whole cognizance and trial of prophets, therefore a prophet was not to suffer out of that city; but this

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for the slaughter of all the prophets; and hereupon he broke out into a most pathetic exclamation against the inhabitants of that unhappy city, reproaching them with their rejecting the kind offers of the Gospel, and with their killing the messengers sent from God, and then denouncing their sad approaching destruction and calamity.

One Sabbath-day, when Jesus was invited by a Pharisee of some distinction to dine with him, a man distempered with a dropsy came after him; and when several of the company narrowly observed how he would behave upon this occasion †, he first cured the poor man, and then justified his doing so by the same argument he made use of to those who reprehended him for curing the crooked woman on the Sabbath-day. Observing, however, how eager the guests were to take every one the uppermost places at the table, he endeavoured to convince them how commendable it was for a man to seat himself in a place below, rather than above his rank and condition, because daily experience shewed us, that humility was a virtue, which was so far from debasing, that it raised and exalted the person who practised it. And then turning his discourse to the master of the house, whom he found too regardless of the poor and needy, he gave him (and in him all others) the good advice || of inviting the poor, the blind, and the lame, who could make no requital, rather than his own friends ‡ or rich acquaintance, who were able to return the compliment to his entertainments; and in so doing he might depend upon a recompence from God in the kingdom of heaven.

At the hearing of these last words, one in the company repeated that common saying among the Rabbins, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread †² in the kingdom of

interpretation seems to enervate our Saviour's sentiment, whose design certainly was to represent the city of Jerusalem, so accustomed to shed the blood of the prophets, that there was scarce a possibility for any prophet's dying out of it. *Calmet's Commentary.*

† The presence of the dropsical man, and its being the Sabbath-day, would involve our Saviour, as they thought, in this difficulty,—That either, by forbearing to heal at that time, he would betray his fear, and strengthen their superstitions with regard to such ritual observances; or else, that by doing it he must incur the censure and odium of a Sabbath-breaker, and a contemner of the law: but he, who was well aware what spies he had upon him, so ordered the matter as to accomplish what he saw fit, without any opportunity given for his enemies to compass their ends by it. *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. iii.

|| Whether this precept is to be understood in a literal sense or no, may, in some measure, admit of a debate. Our Saviour, when he acted the part of a rich man in feeding the multitude, had people of the meanest rank, and among these "the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind, who daily resorted to him for cure, for the chief of his guests: but most men think, that these extraordinary actions of his were no proper patterns for us in the dispensation of our charity, but that we answer the intent of the precept as well, if we do what is equivalent to us in respect of charge, and more advantageous to them and their families, by sending them meat or money, to refresh them at home. *Whitby's Annotations.*

‡ The words in the text are, "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen nor thy rich neighbours,"

Luke xiv. 12. It is to be observed in our expounding of Scripture, that as comparative particles are sometimes used in a sense negative, (for so we find the chief priests moving the people, *ὡς μᾶλλον Βαραββᾶν ἀπελύθη αὐτοῖς*, that he should rather release Barrabbas to them, i. e. that he should release Barrabbas and not Jesus) so negative particles are oft used in a sense comparative; as when we read in Prov. viii. 10. "Receive my instructions, and not silver;" and in Joel ii. 13. "Rend your hearts, and not your garments," the meaning is, rather than silver or your garments; in like manner as here, "Call not thy friends nor thy brethren," i. e. be not so much concerned to call them as the poor. For it can hardly be thought that our Saviour's intent in this precept was absolutely to forbid all invitations of our neighbours or friends to dine or sup with us. This is an act of kindness and civility, and of good tendency, sometimes to maintain and promote amity and friendship among neighbours and acquaintance; but his only meaning is, that we should not invite them out of a prospect of a compensation from them again, which is making a kind of traffic with our generosity; but instead of this, that we should expend our money in the exercise of charity to such as are in no condition to make us a retribution. *Whitby's and Pool's Annotations.*

†² From the ensuing parable it appears, that the kingdom of God here does not signify the kingdom of heaven in its most exalted sense, but only the kingdom of the Messiah, whereof this carnal Jew here speaks according to the received sense of his nation, as of a glorious temporal kingdom, in which the Jews should lord it over the Gentile world, enjoy their wealth, and be provided with all those earthly blessings and delights in which they placed their felicity. *Whitby's Annotations.*

God;" whereupon our Lord took occasion to represent the different success of the Gospel, the rejection of the Jews, and the call of the Gentiles, under the † emblem of a feast, to which those that were invited, upon sundry pretences, refused to come, so that the master of the house was obliged to send out into the streets and lanes of the city, and into the high-ways and hedges, to collect a sufficient complement of guests, being determined "that none of those who were first invited should taste of his supper."

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

As he was going from the Pharisee's house where he dined, being attended with a mighty concourse of people, he began to explain †² to them what they were to trust to if they intended to become his disciples; that they were † to renounce even some of their most lawful affections, and prepare themselves to undergo the most unjust persecutions, if they thought of making profession of his religion: and therefore (that they might not fail in the day of trial) he advised them to consider well before-hand what such a profession would cost them: "For as he who begins to build, and has not money to accomplish it, leaves his work imperfect, and himself becomes ridiculous; or as he that designs a war, and has not men and money enough to go through with it, had better never have engaged in it; so he that undertakes to be a Christian, must resolve to renounce all that is precious, and to bear all that is afflictive to him in this world, or else he will never be able to hold out."

Among the great multitudes that daily resorted to our Saviour to hear his discourses were many publicans and sinners †³. This gave great offense to the scribes and Pharisees †⁴, who murmured at his condescending goodness, in so freely conversing and eat-

† If we compare this with another passage elsewhere, Matth. xxii. 2. we may be farther satisfied, that by the kingdom of heaven is here represented the Gospel dispensation; and this, as it ministers true plenty and pleasure, all that men can want, and all that they can wish to render them perfectly happy, is compared to a supper. The bounty and infinite love of Almighty God are signified by the greatness of that supper and the multitudes bidden to it. The first bidding implies all the previous notices of the Messiah, by which the law and the prophets were intended to prepare the Jews for the reception of him and his doctrine. The second bidding, when all things were ready, seems to import all that Jesus did, and taught, and suffered, for their conversion and salvation, and all the testimonies and exhortations of his apostles and other preachers of the Gospel, to the same purpose. The excuses sent for their absence are the prejudices, and passions, and worldly interest, which did not only hinder those Jews from coming into the faith, but disposed them likewise to treat all attempts to win them over with the utmost obstinacy and contempt. The guests brought in from abroad, to supply their places, are the Gentile world, to whom (after that the Jews had thrust it from them) the subsequent tenders of this grace and salvation were made: And the declaring that "none of those who were bidden should taste of this supper," denotes the giving those Jews over to a reprobate sense, and leaving them under that infidelity and perverseness in which they continue hardened to this very day. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii.

†² It was a custom of the Jewish doctors to lay down before their proselytes what inconveniences

would attend upon their precepts; and, in conformity to this, our Saviour acquaints his disciples with two things that would be a means to deter them from embracing his religion, viz. the difficulty of the duties that would be required of them, and the greatness of the sufferings to which they would be exposed.

† The words in the text are,—“If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple,” Luke xiv. 26. But their meaning in this place is not that a man should, properly speaking, hate his father and his mother; for certainly our Blessed Lord, who enjoins us to love our enemies, would never make it our duty to hate our parents: And therefore the word *μισέω* (which is an Hebraism) must necessarily here be taken in a lower sense, viz. *to love or esteem less*, in the same manner as it is said of Leah, that Jacob hated her, Gen. xxix. 31. i. e. did not love her so well as he did Rachel: For that this, and no more, is here the import of the expression, is plain from a parallel text, “He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me,” Matth. x. 37. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†³ They whom the Scripture generally, and this portion of it in particular, characterise by the name of sinners, are the habitual and obdurate, the great and eminent offenders. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii.

†⁴ The scribes and Pharisees looked upon the publicans as unfit to be conversed with upon any account, even though it was to reclaim them from their evil courses. Our Saviour had told them that he conversed among such people as their physician, and not

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ing with such infamous people. But, to vindicate himself in this respect, he compared his conduct to that of a man, who, having an hundred sheep, left the ninety and nine †¹ in quest of one †² which was gone astray; to that of a woman, searching, with all diligence, for a piece of silver †³ that was lost, and rejoicing exceedingly when she found it; and to that of a father †⁴, receiving his returning prodigal son with all the indications of joy and tenderness, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his elder brother: For under the name of the elder brother, he reproved the unjust murmurings of the Pharisees, who were displeased at his entertaining sinners, though the salvation of such was the main end of his coming into the world.

Having thus exposed the pride and envy of the Pharisees, he proceeded in the next place to reprove their covetousness, and, at the same time, to instruct his disciples what the proper use was that they were to make of their riches. To this purpose he introduces an unjust steward †⁵, who, after having abused his trust, and wasted his master's substance, is contriving what provision to make for himself (which he does by abating his master's debtors in their bills) when he came to be removed from his place; and

as their companion, and that therefore his proper business was among such patients, Matth. ix. 12, 13. but this apology would not silence their murmurings, because their opinion was, that God had cast off all care of them, and never intended to grant them repentance unto life. *Burkit*, and *Whitby's* Annotations.

† Here Christ sets ninety and nine just persons in opposition to one sinner, not that it is so in proportion; for there are very few who live according to the rule that is prescribed them; but because, even upon a supposition that it were so, such is the value of our immortal souls, that great care and pains ought to be taken even for the sake of one. *Grotius* in locum.

†² A sheep, when once it has strayed away, is a creature remarkably stupid and heedless. It goes wandering on, without either power or inclination to return back, though each moment it is in danger of becoming a sacrifice to every beast of prey that meets it. And such, in truth, is the condition of people addicted to vice, when they have broken out of God's fold, and forsaken the pleasant pastures which he provides for them. They grow careless and inconsiderate, and are exposed to snares and temptations every moment. They are hardened by custom; are depraved in their affections and judgment; are neither disposed to grow wiser, nor of themselves capable of conquering inveterate habits of vice, though they should now and then shew some good inclination to attempt it. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii.

†³ By this comparison of a lost piece of money, we are given to understand, that God esteems the souls of men precious, and reckons them among his wealth and his treasures. And this indeed they are; made and formed by his own hand; impressed with his own image and superscription; and from that stamp, which carries a resemblance to the great King of the whole world, deriving all their currency and value. But when they abandon God's laws, and forsake the Divine and rational life, a life of goodness and wisdom, renounced for one of sensuality, and madness, and mischief, then they are lost; lost to themselves;

lost to God. Then this coin is debased; the impression obliterated and gone; and that piece of money, as to the worth and use of it, is in a manner as if it were no longer in being. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii.

†⁴ This parable is deservedly reckoned a masterpiece in its kind, and what cannot be paralleled by any of the apologues or allegorical writings of Heathen authors. It is adorned and beautified with the most glowing colours and lively similitudes. It is carried on and conducted with admirable wisdom and proportion, in the parts as well as in the whole; and there is so exact a relation between the things represented, and the representations of them, that the most elevated understanding will admire, and the lowest capacity discover, the excellent and most useful moral that lies under so thin and fine a veil.

†⁵ There is a good deal in this and the following parable, that alludes to the notions of the Jewish Rabbins, and their manner of expressing them. "The fruits of the earth (says one of their doctors) are like a table spread in an house; the owner of this is God; man in this world is, as it were, the steward of this house: If he behaves himself well, he will find favour in the eyes of his Lord; if otherwise, he will be removed from his stewardship." *Kimchi* on Isaiah xl. and so the scope of this following parable seems to be this,—That we are to look upon ourselves, not as lords of the good things of this life, as though we might use them at our pleasure; but only as stewards, who must be faithful in the administration of them. The parables indeed make mention of no other goods but those of riches; but we must not therefore imagine, that rich men only stand in the capacity of stewards, since every advantage of nature, or of grace, as well as those of fortune, our life, our health, our strength, our wit and parts, our knowledge natural and acquired, our time, our leisure, our every ability, our every opportunity, our every inclination to do well, are all our Master's goods; all entrusted with us; all capable of benefiting others; and will all at last be brought to our account. *Whitby's* Annotations, and *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii.

thereupon he teaches his disciples, not to imitate the injustice, but the forecast and policy of this steward, by employing their earthly † riches to make them friends in the persons of the poor, that when they should come to leave this transitory world; they might, by this means, be received into everlasting habitations in heaven; and so the children of light become as prudent in things relating to their salvation, as the children of this world are in the management of their temporal affairs.

This discourse made little or no impression upon the Pharisees; and therefore (to awaken their attention) he propounded to them the parable of a certain rich man, †² living in pride, and ease, and luxury, who after his death was carried into the dismal regions of the damned; and of a certain poor beggar, named Lazarus, †³ lying at his gate full of sores and ulcers, and desiring the fragments that came from his table, who, when he died, was transported by angels into Abraham's bosom †⁴: "That in these different states, the poor man, in compensation for his former misery, enjoyed all the

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

† The words in the text are,—“Make yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness,” Luke xvi. 9: Now *mammon*, or *mammona*, is a Syriac word, and properly denotes *riches* or *treasure*. It comes from an Hebrew root, which signifies to be hid, and is therefore thought to comprehend, not only gold, silver, and other metals, that are hid in the bowels of the earth, but stores likewise of corn, wine, and oil (a great part of the riches of the eastern people), which they often buried in subterraneous caverns, to conceal them from their enemies. These are called the mammon of unrighteousness, because they frequently occasion much iniquity in the world, and are often acquired by very indirect means; but our Lord, by this expression, must not be supposed to command alms to be given of that which is gotten by fraud or injustice, because such charity can never be acceptable to God. No; the duty of those who have acquired wealth unrighteously is, to make restitution to the persons they have injured; if these be dead, then to their heirs or executors; and the poor are only then receivers of the fruits of injustice, when a person is conscious that he has been unjust, but does not know the person to whom he has been so. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Beausobre's Annotations*.

†² Whether this representation, which our Saviour here makes of the different fates of the rich man and the poor, be a parable, or a real history, is a matter wherein several commentators are not agreed. We are told, however, that in several manuscripts, both Greek and Latin, there are these words in the beginning of the 19th verse, “He spake to them another parable,” and that this very parable is in the Gemara Babylonicum, from whence it is cited by the learned Sheringham, in the preface to his *Ioma*; as indeed, if we look into the circumstances of it, such as the rich man's lifting up his eyes in hell, and seeing Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, his discourse to Abraham, his complaint of being tormented with flames, and his desire that Lazarus might be sent to cool his tongue, or, at least, to convert his surviving brethren: If (together with the great gulph that is fixed between the two places of bliss and torment) we do but consider these particulars, I say, we must needs conclude, that, as they cannot be understood of any departed soul in a literal sense, they must be an allegorical re-

presentation of things invisible, by terms, in some measure, suitable to the opinion of the Jews concerning the state of souls after death. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*.

†³ *Lazar*, which according to most is but a contraction from *Eleazar*, is the very same with *Aniachad*, a poor man in the Gemara, and properly signifies *one without help*, or rather *one that has God only for his help*: But in the times of our Blessed Saviour, we may observe, that it was a common name among the Jews, and given to men of some distinction, as we find it was to the brother of Martha and Mary. *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

†⁴ The Garden of Eden and Paradise, the Throne of Glory, and Abraham's Bosom, were common expressions among the Jewish doctors to denote a future state of felicity; for so Josephus, in his discourse of the Maccabees, says of good men, that “they are gathered to the region of the patriarchs, and that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; do receive their souls:” And they tell us farther, that the souls of such men are carried thither by angels; for so the Targum, on Cant. iv. 12. says, that “no man hath power to enter into the garden of Eden but the just, whose souls are carried thither by the hands of good angels.” Our commentators, however, have perceived something peculiar in the phrase of Abraham's Bosom. They imagine, that the Jewish notion of paradise was a place abounding with delights and perpetual feastings, where Abraham, the great founder of their nation, enjoys the uppermost place at the table, and while all his children sit down with him, some at a nearer and some at a farther distance from him, he who has the honour to recline upon his bosom (as Lazarus is here represented), is in a higher degree of felicity than ordinary. But others deride all this notion, and assert, that Abraham's Bosom was so called, not from any posture of guests at table, but from little children, whom their tender parents do sometimes take in their bosom, and sometimes cause them to sleep there. For since “those that die in the Lord, say they, are said to sleep, or rest from their labours,” where can they be said to enjoy this rest or sleep better than in the bosom of the father of the faithful? *Beausobre's* and *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

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felicity that his heart could wish; while the rich man, in punishment of his luxury and want of mercy to the poor, was forced to undergo the most inexpressible torments, without being able to procure so much as one drop † of water to cool his inflamed tongue; and without being able to prevail for the once despised Lazarus, to be sent upon a message of admonition to his surviving brethren, because they had Moses †² and the prophets for their instructors, or a standing revelation of the Divine will (and if †² it prevailed not with them nothing would) for the direction of their lives."

Of the great numbers of people who attended our Lord wherever he went, some came out of necessity, others out of curiosity; some out of a spirit of devotion, and others out of a spirit of captiousness, and with an intent to entangle him in his discourse. Of this last sort were the scribes and Pharisees, who, taking the question of divorces †⁴ to be somewhat intricate, put it to our Saviour; but he, limiting the permission of such separations to the case of adultery only, reminded them of that strict and natural union †⁵ between man and wife, which God had appointed at their first creation, and was not

† A good deal of this is to be taken in a figurative sense, but our Saviour might possibly insert this passage in the parable on purpose to strike at a vain imagination which some of the Jews were apt to entertain, viz. "that hell-fire had no power over the sinners of Israel, because Abraham and Isaac came down thither to fetch them from thence;" which could not fail of being effectually confuted, when they heard Abraham, as it were, with his own mouth, declaring, that no help was to be expected from him when once they were got into that place. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†² Moses and the prophets comprehend all the several dispensations of God's mercy, as expressed either in the Old or New Testament. They signify the whole revealed will of God, and whatever he hath set down therein, as necessary to our attaining eternal life and happiness. Whatever doctrine can be proved out of them, we are bound to embrace it without a new miracle; as, on the other hand, whatever doctrine is inconsistent with them, we must reject, though an angel from heaven, or one from the dead, should come and preach it to us. Bishop *Sharpe's* Sermons. [This seems not to be accurately expressed. The writings of Moses and the prophets certainly contain all that was required of the Jews under the Mosaic dispensation; and the rich man and Lazarus are represented as having lived under no other dispensation. To hear Moses and the prophets therefore was sufficient for them and their brethren; but the Old Testament literally interpreted, surely does not contain all that we Christians are bound to believe and to practise, whilst it enjoins many things as duties on all who lived under that dispensation, which are no duties on us who live under the Gospel.]

†³ One rising from the dead certainly could not do it, because he could come with no greater authority, deliver no better motives to repentance, nor give men any greater assurance of the truth of what he said than what they had already. That a resurrection from the dead was not sufficient to convince them, is plain from hence, that our Saviour had raised Lazarus, and yet the Pharisees were not the more obedient to his doctrine. Nay, though they had the most clear proofs of his own resurrection, from the

testimony of their own prophets and their guards that kept the sepulchre; from the testimony of their own senses, of the apostles, and five hundred witnesses at once; and all this confirmed by miraculous effusions of the Holy Ghost, and a multitude of wonders wrought in his name; yet all this was insufficient to reclaim that wicked generation from their iniquity, or to provoke them to repentance. Bishop *Blackall's* Sermons at *Boyle's* Lectures, and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†⁴ The Jews, at this time, were divided in their opinions as to the matter of divorces. Some of them who followed the sentiments of the school of Shammai, held, that the wife was to be put away only for the crime of adultery, because Moses directs that this might be done in case the husband "had found some uncleanness in her," Deut. xxiv. 1. But others, who adhered to the notions of the school of Hillel (and they by much were the greater number), maintained, on the contrary, that this was permitted to be done for any cause whatever; because, in the same verse it is expressed, that, "if she found not grace" in her husband's eyes, she was divorceable. This was the question which the Pharisees brought to our Saviour, thinking that he must have decided it, either against the law of Moses, or against the determination of one of these two famous schools, and, one way or other, have become offensive to the people; but our Saviour evaded all this, by reducing matrimony to its original institution. *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

†⁵ This is a matter which the heathens themselves seemed not unacquainted with; and therefore it is said in Hierocles, that "nature prompts us to marriage, in that she hath made us so, that two should live together, and have one common work to beget children;" and that tale of Plato in his *Convivium*, "That man at first was made male and female, and that though Jupiter cleft them asunder, there was a natural love towards one another, and an inclination to heal human nature, by making one again of two," seems to be only a corruption of the account in Genesis of Eve's being made out of Adam's rib. *Whitby's* Annotations.

consequently to be disannulled by any human institution. Here the Pharisees, thinking they had got the advantage of the argument, objected the precept (a) of Moses, wherein he permitted the husband †, in many cases, to give a bill of divorce to the wife. But to this our Saviour replied, That though, under the Mosaic dispensation, God, knowing their obstinacy, and perverse inclinations, allowed a dispensation †² in this point, by tolerating divorces; yet, according to the original institution of marriage, it was not so; and therefore, to reduce the matter to its primary establishment, he determined that all divorces for any less cause than that of fornication were illegal, and, on both sides, attended with adultery; which, when some of the disciples heard, and (since the engagement was so rigorous) began to express their dislike of marriage, our Lord allowed it to be true, that in those who had the gift of continency, a single life was more conducive towards the attainment of the kingdom of heaven, but that those who had it not, and thought proper to marry, ought by all means to adhere to the first institution.

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

After this he began to remind his disciples of several things he had instructed them in before, viz. of the impossibility of preventing scandals and offences; of the duty of forgiving our brother his repeated transgressions; of the necessity and efficacy of faith, in order to be heard in our requests to God; of humility in the performance of our duty, because at the best we are but unprofitable servants; and especially of humility in our addresses to God, for which he gave them a parabolical instance in the behaviour of a Pharisee †³ and publican; the Pharisee vaunting over his own praise at his devo-

(a) Deut. xxiv. 1, &c.

† The Pharisees, in their reply to our Saviour, seem to intimate, that the lawfulness of divorces was founded upon a Divine command: "Why then did Moses command to give her a bill of divorcement, and put her away?" Mark x. 4. But Moses nowhere commands, but only in some cases permits the doing of this; nor is the design of the whole precept to give any encouragement to this practice, but only to provide, that (in case men will be so perverse and hard-hearted as to turn away their wives upon every slight occasion) the thing might be done in a proper and public manner, not by word of mouth, but by bill of divorcement delivered in form, that when the woman is thus dismissed, she may not be quite ruined, but left at her liberty to become another man's wife. Deut. xxiv. 2.

†³ But here the question is—Whether this dispensation excused the common divorces among the Jews (which our Saviour looks upon as an infringement upon the primitive institution of marriage) from all sin, especially that of adultery in the sight of God? It is granted indeed, that these divorces were contrary to the equity and genuine intention of God's first institution of marriage; but then it must be added, that God, by his servant Moses, had dispensed with his own institution; that under such his dispensation there could be no prohibition, and that, where there was no prohibition, there could be no transgression; unless we can suppose that God could forbid and permit the same thing at the same time. Our Saviour indeed, upon this occasion, prescribes a new law, which had not before obtained among the Jews; he retracts the dispensation that Moses had given; he reduces marriage to its primitive institution; and, except in cases of adultery, allows of no divorces, but accounts them all null and invalid: However, under

the Mosaic dispensation it was not so. From the permission given to the women when they were thus divorced, to be married to others, it is evident that these divorces quite dissolved the bond of matrimony, otherwise we must say, that God gave these women, when they married again, a toleration to live in a state of adultery, and so, at long run, the whole commonwealth of Judea must, by a Divine permission, have been filled with adulteries, and a spurious offspring, which is incongruous to the wisdom and purity of Almighty God to imagine. *Whitby's Annotations.*

†³ The Pharisee's temper is sufficiently discovered in the form of his prayer:—"God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican, Luke xviii. 11. The style is insolent and boasting; that of an herald rather than a suppliant; and does not so much render God his praises as proclaim his own. But admitting this lofty opinion of his own excellencies to be never so just, yet what warrant or privilege could he have to disparage and vilify his brethren? "I am not as other men:" What could be more fulsome vanity than thus to set himself off, as an exception to a whole world at once? "Or even as this publican:" To break that bruised reed, and, with scornful reproaches, to fall foul on a wounded soul, whose penitent sorrow called for the compassion of every stander-by. The publican, quite contrary in all his expressions, in all his deportment, speaks nothing but shame and confusion, the tenderest contrition, and most profound humility. He stands afar off, as not presuming upon a nearer approach to the presence of so holy a majesty. He lifts not up so much as his eyes to heaven, but by the guilt and melancholy of his countenance, takes to himself the ignominious titles so liberally bestowed by his scornful companion. He smites upon his breast, as conscious of the pollutions lodged there;

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tion, and preferring himself before all others; but the publican, with a dejected heart, confessing his sins; and imploring God's mercy; and yet the latter (according to our Lord's judgment) departed more acceptable to God than the other, because the Divine decree is, "that pride should be abased, and humility exalted."

The Pharisees, who waited for the coming of the Messiah, and had drawn up a romantic scheme of his appearing with the utmost glory of a temporal prince, came, about this time, and demanded of him, when the kingdom of God †, whereof he had told them so much, was to appear? To which he gave them in answer, "That it should not appear with any outward pomp or splendor, as they vainly imagined; and that, in truth, it was already begun among them, though they had no perception of it:" And then, turning to his disciples, he strictly cautioned them not to be deluded by false Christs and false prophets *, who would pretend to shew them the kingdom of God

looks not abroad, but confines his thoughts to his own misery; alleges nothing in his own behalf, no mixture of good to mitigate the evil of his past life; feels no comfort, seeks no refuge, except in the mercy of a forgiving God; brings no motive to incline that mercy, but a sorrowful sense of his own unworthiness, and an humble hope in God's unbounded goodness: And therefore upon this, this saving, this only supporting attribute, he casts himself entirely with a "God be merciful to me a sinner!" *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii.

† Whether the Pharisees put this question to our Saviour in derision, because, in his discourses, he had so often mentioned the kingdom of God, or in sober seriousness, because at this time they were in strong expectations of the coming of the Messiah, and his erecting a secular kingdom among them, is not so easy a matter to determine. Their contemptible opinion of Christ inclines some to think the former; but their generally received opinion about the Messiah gives some countenance to the latter: But in whatsoever sense they intended the question, our Saviour's answer perfectly fits them. Only we may observe, that by the kingdom of God here, the Pharisees and our Saviour meant two very different things: The Pharisees, a flourishing kingdom, wherein the Messiah was to reduce all other nations under the Jewish yoke; but our Saviour, a kingdom of wrath and vengeance, which he designed to exercise even upon the Jews themselves; and withal a spiritual kingdom, which he intended to erect in the hearts of men by the kindly operations of his word and Spirit, when his Gospel should be more fully propagated. For this is the meaning of that comparison, "As the lightning which shineth from one part of heaven to the other part under heaven, so also shall the coming of the Son of Man be in his day," *Luke xvii. 24*. He had told them that the kingdom of God was already come among them, and had appeared in the purity of his doctrine, and the miracles which he had wrought to confirm it, though not in that glaring light as to make them take a proper notice of it; and here he tells them farther, that after his resurrection it would shine with such a fresh and glorious brightness, by the effusion of the Holy Ghost on his disciples, as would render it equal to the splendor of the sun, shining from one part of heaven to the other, and

cause it to be propagated almost as quick as lightning through the world; and that then this Son of Man, so scornfully rejected by them, would also appear suddenly and gloriously to revenge upon them their infidelity, and the affronts which they had offered to him. *Pool's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

* The distinction between false Christs and false prophets is, that the former took upon them to be Christ, and came under that name; the latter were such as promised and foretold false things. Among the number of the false Christs who appeared in the time prefixed by our Saviour, i. e. between his resurrection and the destruction of Jerusalem, are generally reckoned Dositheus, who gave it out that he was the Christ whom Moses had foretold, (*Basnage, Histoire des Juifs, lib. ii. cap. 13.*) Simon Magus, who bewitched the people by his sorceries, and made himself pass "for the great power of God," *Acts viii. 9, 10.* and those many more whom the "time of the advent of their king Messiah (as *Josephus* expresses it) prevailed with to set up for kings, *De Bello Jud. lib. i.* Among the number of false prophets who appeared in this period are likewise reckoned Theudas, (not the person mentioned *Acts v. 36.*) who, in the government of Fadus, promised his followers that he would divide the river Jordan, (as it was in the days of Joshua and Elias) and give them a free passage, *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xx. c. 1.* The Egyptian Jew, who, in the government of Felix, drew thirty thousand after him to the Mount of Olives, where he promised by his prayers to make the walls of Jerusalem (as those of Jericho once did) fall flat on the ground; thence drive the Roman forces; and there fix the seat of his empire, *de Bello Jud. lib. ii.* A certain magician, who in the government of Festus led great numbers of Jews into the desert, and promised them a deliverance from all their troubles, *Antiq. lib. xxii.* And several others (as the same historian informs us, *de Bello Jud. lib. vii.*) who taught the Jews, even to the last, to expect help and deliverance. Good reason therefore had our Blessed Saviour to caution his disciples against all such pretenders to a Divine mission, since, according to his prediction, and as the same historian expresses it, "the land, at this time, was quite over-run with impostors and seducers, who drew the people after them in shoals," though the Roman governors were

where it was not; that before he could enter into his glorified state, he was to suffer many things, and be rejected by the Jews; but that after his death, he would give incontestable proofs of his power and dominion, by the wonderful propagation of his Gospel, and by the speedy and amazing vengeance which he intended to take of that nation. He therefore exhorted them not to imitate the security of the people in Noah's time, or of the inhabitants of Sodom, nor to express any concern for the destruction of their country, as did Lot's wife for the burning of Sodom †; but to use their utmost care and diligence (when they saw the Roman †² armies advancing) not to be involved in the general calamity: and because, in involving some, and preserving others, there would be much of God's distinguishing Providence concerned, he therefore exhorted them to pray without fainting, or being discouraged at any thing; and to this purpose propounded a parable of a poor woman, who, by her continued importunity alone, prevailed with an unjust judge †³ to vindicate her wrongs, "though he feared neither God nor man."

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

Shortly after this Jesus crossed the river Jordan into Perea †⁴, where he was followed

so very severe, that there "hardly a day passed without the execution of some of them. *Antiq. lib. xx. c. 6.*

† Instead of making haste to save herself, as the angel had commanded her, she, out of a vain curiosity, must needs look back, either regretting what she had left behind her in the city, or concerned for those that were destroyed in it, till she was overtaken with the flames, and changed into a statue of salt, or into the condition of a corps salted and embalmed, which continued as a monument of her disobedience for many ages after. And, in like manner, if any of our Saviour's disciples neglected the advice which he here gave them, and continued in Jerusalem, when the Roman army had closely invested it, they, very likely, were involved in the common destruction. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†² The words in the text are,—“Wheresoever the body, or the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together,” Matth. xxiv. 28. Luke xvii. 37. These words, which our Saviour here makes proverbial, seem to have been borrowed from that passage in Job, where he speaks of the eagle in this manner: “She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place; from thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off. Her young ones also suck up blood; and where the slain are, there is she,” Job xxxix. 28, &c. Upon the account of the swiftness, the strength, and invincibility of this bird, no doubt it was that the Romans made the eagle their ensign in war: And therefore our Saviour, by making use of this expression, gives us to understand that the Romans would come upon the Jews with a sudden destruction; surround them so, that there should be no escaping their hands; and in whatsoever country they found them, there put them all to the sword. For the eagle, mentioned in Job, our translators have rendered by a word which signifies a vulture, a bird consecrated to Mars, because it loves to feed upon man's flesh, and therefore, by a kind of natural instinct, travels along with armies, in expectation of the carcases that fall there. Nor is it an uncommon thing for the prophets to ex-

press the day of God's vengeance under the idea of a feast, which he hath prepared for the ravenous birds and beasts of the field; for thus saith the Lord, “Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field; assemble yourselves, and come, gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice, that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel; that ye may eat flesh and drink blood, even the flesh of the mighty and the blood of the princes of the earth,” Ezek. xxxix. 17, 18. Vid. Isaiah xxxiv. 6. and Jer. xlvi. 10. *Hammond's Annotations and Calmet's Commentary.*

†³ Though it were blasphemy to think that God acts upon the same motives with this unjust judge, yet this we may learn from the nature of the parable, that if a person, who neither fears God nor regards man, who had neither any sense of religion or humanity, may be supposed to be so far prevailed upon by the earnest prayer of a miserable necessitous creature, as to grant the request made to him, and to administer relief to the supplicant, merely upon the continuance and importunity of the petitions that are put up; how much more ought we to think that God, who is infinite goodness itself, who is always kind and bountiful to his creatures, who delights to do them good, even without their desiring it, and who is able to do them good with much less pains than they can request it; how much more ought we to think, I say, that this God, upon our earnest and hearty prayer to him, (especially if we be importunate and persevering in our devotions), will return us a kind answer, and grant us such supplies, such protection or assistance, as shall be needful for us. *Bishop Smatridge's Sermons.*

†⁴ This word is derived from the Greek *πέραν*, beyond, and signifies the country beyond Jordan, or on the east side of that river. It was bounded (according to Josephus) to the west by Jordan; to the east, by Philadelphia; to the north by Pella; and to the south by Macheron; and was a fruitful country, abounding with pines, olive trees, palm trees, and other plants, that grew up and down in the fields, in great plenty and perfection; and in the excessive

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again by vast multitudes of people, whom he both taught and cured of such distempers as they had, insomuch, that several of the company, perceiving how ready he was to do good to all that came unto him, brought their little children † with them in order to partake of his Divine benediction; but his disciples, thinking it below the dignity of their Master to be disturbed and interrupted by infants, at first refused admittance to those who brought them, until Jesus, having reproved them for so doing, and withal recommended the innocence and simplicity of these babes as a pattern for their imitation, commanded them all to be introduced, and taking them up in his arms, he laid his hands upon them, and blessed them, and so departed from the place where this transaction happened.

As he was on his journey, a young person of distinction, who was very rich and wealthy, desired to know of him what he was to do in order to attain eternal life. Our Saviour proposed to him the observation of the moral law, and remitted him, in particular, to the commandments of the second table †², as a certain sign of his keeping those of the first; but when the young gentleman told him, that all these he had made it his study to observe from his youth; and our Lord, who knew his covetous temper, and was willing to touch the secret sore of his mind, told him, that if he aimed at perfection in religion, his only way would be to sell his estate †³, and give it to the poor, in hopes of a greater treasure in heaven, and to come and be one of his disciples; the young man

heats was well watered and refreshed with springs and torrents from the mountains. *De Bellq Jud. lib. iii. c. 2.*

† The parents who brought their children to Christ were doubtless such as believed him to be a prophet sent from God, and were persuaded that the touch or imposition of his hand would be of great benefit to them, both to draw down a blessing from heaven upon them, and to preserve them from diseases which they saw him cure in persons more advanced in years. We may observe, therefore, that though these children were no more than infants, (as appears by our Saviour's taking them up in his arms, Mark x. 16.), yet their parents thought them capable of spiritual blessings, and of receiving advantage by our Saviour's prayers. They however might bring them with no farther intent than what is customary among the Jews even now, when they present their children to any of their famous doctors, viz. to obtain his blessing; but by the reason which our Saviour gives for their admission into the kingdom of heaven, it appears, that he perceived something in them (besides their being emblems of humility) that qualified them to come unto him; and what could that be but a fitness to be dedicated to the service of God, and to enter into covenant with him early (as the Jewish children did) by the rite of baptism (which was his institution), even as the other did by that of circumcision? *Calmet's Commentary, and Whitby's Annotations.*

†² We must not imagine, because our Saviour refers this young man to the precepts of the second table only, that therefore they are of more obligation to us than those of the first, or that, by performing them alone, we may attain eternal life: Our Lord has elsewhere determined, that the great commandment of all is, "to love the Lord our God with all our hearts," and here he instances in those of the second table,

not only because the love of our neighbour is an excellent evidence of our love to God, but because the Pharisee (of which sect very probably this person was one) thought these commandments of trivial account, and easy performance; and yet by some of these it was that our Saviour intended, by and bye, to convince this enquirer, that he neither had nor could keep them. *Pool's Annotations.*

†³ Since our Blessed Saviour here requires of this young man, not only to withdraw his heart from an inordinate love of his possessions, but to sell them all and give the money to the poor, we may be sure that this was a particular command to him, in order to convince him of the insincerity of his pretended love to life eternal, and not a precept common to all Christians. That there were rich men in the church, we learn from several passages in Scripture, 1 Tim. vi. 17. James i. 10. and ii. 2. St Peter, in his speech to Ananias, permits Christians to retain what is their own, Acts v. 4. and St Paul does not enjoin the Corinthians to sell all, and give alms, but only requests them to administer to their brethrens wants out of their abundance, 2 Cor. viii. 14. So that if riches fall into the hands of one who knoweth how to use them to God's glory, and the relief of indigent Christians, as well as to supply his own needs, it seems a contradiction to conceive, that God requires him to part with them, and so divest himself of any farther opportunity of promoting his glory, and doing good to his needy members. This precept therefore of selling all we have, can only take place when we are in the same situation with this young man, i. e. have an express command from God so to do, or when we find that our riches are an impediment to the security of our eternal interest; for in that case we must part with a right-hand, or a right eye, the nearest and dearest things we have, "rather than be cast into hell fire." *Whitby's Annotations.*

went away very pensive and melancholy, being loth to part with his present possessions for any treasure in reversion. Whereupon our Lord, turning to his disciples, began to declare what an insurmountable obstacle riches, without the grace of God, were to any man's salvation, and that "it was easier (according to the Hebrew proverb) for a camel to go through the eye of a needle † than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven : " At which expression, when his disciples were not a little startled, to remove their fears, he let them know, that the salvation of the rich (though a matter of some difficulty) was not impossible with God, who could change the hearts and affections of men as he pleased.

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

When the apostles heard their Master bidding the " young man sell all, and give it to the poor, and follow him ; " and promising him, for a reward, a treasure in heaven, they began to think, that possibly it might be their case, and the promise, in like manner, concern them ; and therefore, when (in the name of the rest) Peter desired to know of him what reward they were to expect, who had actually relinquished all, and followed him ; his reply was, that, at the general resurrection †², " when himself should be seated upon his throne of glory, they also should sit upon twelve thrones †³, judging the twelve tribes of Israel ; and that not only they, but all others likewise, who, for his

† There are three different opinions among interpreters concerning the meaning of this proverbial saying. Some imagine, that, at Jerusalem, there was a gate, so very low and narrow, that a loaded camel could not pass through it, and that, by reason of its littleness, it was called the needle's eye ; but all this is a mere fiction, devised on purpose to solve this seeming difficulty. The Jews indeed, to signify a thing impossible, had a common proverb among them, that " an elephant cannot pass through the eye of a needle." Now, our Saviour, say some, was pleased to change this proverb from an elephant (which was a beast that few had seen) to a camel, a creature very common in Syria, and whose bunch on his back hindered him from passing through any strait entrance. But others, not able to discern any analogy between a camel and a needle's eye, think, that the word *καμήλος*, here signifies a *cable*, or *thick rope*, which mariners use in casting their anchors ; and that the rather, not only because there is some similitude between a cable and a thread, which is usually drawn through the eye of a needle, but because the Jews (as the learned Buxtorf acquaints us) have a proverb of the like import relating to the cable as they have to the elephant ; for so they say, that as " difficult is the passage of the soul out of the body, as that of a cable through a narrow hole." Whether of these two interpretations takes place, it is a matter of pure indifference : Only we may observe, that the application of the proverb to the rich man's entering into the kingdom of heaven, must not be understood absolutely, but only so as to denote a thing extremely difficult, if not impossible, without an extraordinary influence of the Divine grace. *Calmet's Commentary*, *Hammond's* and *Pool's* Annotations.

†² The word, in the original, is *παλιγγενεσία*, which properly signifies a *new and second state*, and is used among the Pythagoreans for the return of the soul, after it had left one body to take possession of another : And agreeably hereunto it is used, by sacred writers, to denote either the future resurrection,

which will be the reunion of the soul and body, or that great change which was to be effected in the world by the preaching of the Gospel, and more especially by the mission of the Holy Ghost after our Lord's ascension into heaven. *Hammond's* Annotations.

†³ Some interpreters refer these words to that authority, both in matters of discipline and doctrine which the apostles, after the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them, were, by our Lord's commission and appointment, to exercise in the Christian church ; but most understand them of the honours that are to be conferred upon them in a future state. And here some have taken great pains to determine what judgment these persons shall pass ; as that they shall condemn the errors of wicked men by their doctrines, and the malice and obstinacy of infidels by their persecutions, &c. while others have undertaken to assign them their parts in the process of the last great day, and represent them as so many assessors to the supreme Judge, sitting upon the examination and trial of mankind, while all the rest stand at the bar. But though we are well assured that such a judgment shall be, yet, as to the particular circumstances and formalities of it, the Scripture seems to give us but a slender insight ; and therefore, setting aside all dark conjectures about this matter, the most safe and probable way of applying this passage is, to look upon it as spoken after the manner of men, to signify in general a brighter crown, or more exquisite degree of happiness and glory. The apostles accompanied and stuck close to Christ in his low estate. They kept the faith, under the greatest pressures and temptations. They were indefatigably diligent, undauntedly constant in their labours and sufferings for the truth, and most eminently serviceable in advancing the kingdom of Christ upon earth ; and therefore they shall receive an eminent distinction in the kingdom of heaven. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

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and the Gospel's sake, should quit any worldly advantages or possessions, should receive such comforts † in this world, as would vastly surpass their losses, and, in the world to come, eternal life : But then, to shew them that such high rewards proceeded from the bounty of heaven, and no other title, he represented the freedom of God, in the distribution of his favours, under the emblem of a certain master of a family, sending labourers into his vineyard †², some sooner, and some later, but giving them all the same wages : Wherein, though he seemed-kind to some, yet was he unjust to none, because he paid them all according to his agreement, and (having done so) was then certainly left to his option whom to make objects of his liberality.

Our Saviour had not been long in Perea before he received a message out of Judea, from two sisters in Bethany †³, Martha and Mary, of the dangerous sickness of their brother Lazarus, a person highly beloved and esteemed by him ; but he proposing, on this occasion, to manifest the glory of God, as well as his own Divine power and mission, by a greater miracle than a simple cure would be, delayed his going until Lazarus was dead †⁴, and then set forward.

While he was in his journey, he took his apostles aside, and †⁵ told them still more

† That is, the comforts of an upright conscience, a full content of mind, the joys of the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and hopes of glory. They should have God for their Father, and Christ for their spouse, and all good Christians for their friends and brethren, who would honour, succour, and support them more than those that were allied to them by the strictest bonds of nature. *Whitby's Annotations.*

†² This parable is in a great measure taken from the Jerusalem Talmud, where we have an account of a king's hiring labourers, and paying one for a few hours work the whole day's hire, which occasioned great murmuring among the rest. It is our Saviour's custom, we may observe, to make frequent use of Jewish proverbs in his discourses ; and some learned men have taken notice, that the form of prayer which he taught his disciples is chiefly compiled from the Jewish Liturgies. Since therefore he was to teach the people in a parabolical way, he thought it no disparagement to his parts to employ such of their parables as were proper to his purpose of illustrating the spiritual matters of his kingdom ; as well knowing that these parables which were in common use, and familiar to them, would be less offensive, and better remembered by them, than those of his own invention. *Whitby's and Hammond's Annotations.*

†³ Bethany took its name from the tract of ground wherein it stands, so called from the word *βέθανι*, which signifies the *dates of palm trees*, that grew there in great plenty. It was a considerable place, situated at the foot of the Mount of Olives, about fifteen furlongs, or near two miles eastward from Jerusalem ; but at present it is but a very small village. One of our modern travellers acquaints us, that at the first entrance into it there is an old ruin, which they call Lazarus's castle, supposed to have been the mansion-house where he and his sisters lived. At the bottom of a small descent, not far from the castle, you see his sepulchre, which the Turks hold in great veneration, and use it for an oratory or place of prayer. Here, going down by twenty-five steep steps, you come at first into a small square room, and from thence creep into another that is less, about a yard

and a half deep, in which the body is said to have been laid. About a bow-shot from hence, you pass by the place which they say was Mary Magdalen's habitation : and then descending a steep hill, you come to the fountain of the apostles, which is so called, because (as the tradition goes) these holy persons were wont to refresh themselves here, between Jerusalem and Jericho, as it is very probable they might, because the fountain is both close to the road's side, and is very inviting to the thirsty traveller. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table, Wells's Geography of the New Testament, and Maundrell's Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem.*

†⁴ Our Saviour's stay for two days after the message and modest address of the two mournful sisters, kept them indeed a little longer in suspense and grief, but it shewed his perfect wisdom and goodness, as it made the wonderful work more remarkable, and conducive to the fuller conviction of the spectators. Had he gone before Lazarus was dead, they might have attributed his recovery, rather to the strength of nature than to Christ's miraculous power ; or had he raised him as soon as he was dead, they might peradventure have thought it rather some trance or ecstasy, than a death or dissolution : But now, to raise a person four days dead, offensive, and reduced to corruption, was a surprise of unutterable joy to his friends ; removed all possible suspicion of confederacy ; silenced the peevish cavilling, and triumphed over all the obstinacy of prejudice and infidelity. *Bishop Blackhall's Sermons.*

†⁵ In the course of the Gospel, we find our Lord forewarning his disciples, no less than three times, of his approaching sufferings and resurrection. The first intimation of this kind was in the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, when, after St Peter's confession of him to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God, he began to shew unto his disciples how that he must suffer many things, &c." Luke ix. 22. The next we meet with was immediately after his transfiguration in the Mount, when, as he came down from thence with the three apostles, who were the companions of his privacies, he reminded them of what he had told

plainly what the event of it would be; namely, that at this time of his going to Jerusalem, the chief priests and scribes would apprehend and condemn him, and then “deliver him to the Gentiles, who would scourge, and mock, and crucify him; but that on the third day he would rise again.” Upon the mention of his resurrection, which they vainly imagined would be the beginning of his terrestrial greatness, James and John, by the mouth of their mother Salome †, requested of him to have the first places in his kingdom. The first places in his kingdom, he told them, were to be disposed of according to the predetermination of his Father; but a proper qualification for them it was, to be able to take the greatest share of the bitter cup of his sufferings*, which very probably might be their fate †²; and when the ambition of these two brothers provoked the indignation of the other ten apostles, he declared to them all, that his kingdom †³ was far different from those of this world, whose princes and governors

From Matth.
ii. 1. to ii.
13. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

them before, viz. “That the Son of Man should be delivered into the hands of men,” Luke ix. 44. The third warning was that which he gave his apostles apart, when he was going to Jerusalem to suffer, or, as some rather think, when he was going to Bethany, in order to raise Lazarus from the dead: And it is observed of these several warnings, that they rise by degrees, and grow more full and distinct in proportion as the things drew nearer. Thus the first is delivered in general terms: “The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected, and slain, and raised the third day.” The second is enforced with this solemn preface, “Let these sayings sink down in your ears,” Luke ix. 44.; and the third descends to a more particular description of that tragical scene, “He shall be delivered to the Gentiles, and mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on; and they shall scourge him, and put him to death, and the third day he shall rise again,” Luke xviii. 32, 33. Now, whether we consider the danger the apostles were in of being oppressed with an affliction so sensible as the death of their Master, or the general mistake wherewith they were infected, concerning the splendor and worldly pomp of the Messiah’s kingdom, or the scandal that would necessarily arise from the notion of a crucified Saviour, this method of forewarning his disciples of what was to come upon him was highly requisite, to sustain them in their tribulation, to rectify their sentiments, and remove all offences; as it shewed, that his death was voluntary, consonant to the predictions of the prophets, and agreeable to the counsel and appointment of God, and the shame of his crucifixion abundantly recompensed by the glories of his resurrection. Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. ii.

† This their mother might be encouraged to ask, upon the account of her near relation to the Blessed Virgin, her constant accompanying our Saviour, and diligent attendance upon him; and might conceive some hopes of her sons future exaltation, from the pompous name which our Lord had given them, and the great privilege to which he had admitted them (but excluded others) of attending him in his privacies. Whitby’s Annotations, and Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

* It was anciently the custom, at great entertainments, for the governor of the feast to appoint to each of his guests the kind and proportion of wine they

were to drink; and what he had thus appointed them, it was thought a breach of good manners either to refuse or not drink up. Hence a man’s cup, both in sacred and profane authors, came to signify the portion, whether of good or evil, which befalls him in this world. Homer introduces Achilles thus comforting Priamus for the loss of his son:

Δοιοὶ γὰρ τε πίβοι κατακίεσθαι ἐν Διὸς οὔδει
Δάραν ὅα διδάσι, κακῶν ἔτιος δὲ ἰδών
“Ὡ μὲν καμμιζας δῶν Ζεὺς τετυκίεσθαι, &c. II. xxiv.

Not unlike what we meet with in the Psalmist, “In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full mixed, and he poureth out of the same: As for the dregs thereof, all the ungodly of the earth shall drink them out,” Psal. lxxv. 9, 10. And what our Saviour means by the expression we cannot be to seek, since, in two remarkable passages, Luke xxii. 42. and John xviii. 11. he has been his own interpreter; for *lethale poculum bibere*, or to taste of death, was a common phrase among the Jews, and from them we have reason to believe that our Lord borrowed it. Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv. and Whitby’s Annotations.

†² This prediction was literally fulfilled in St James, who was put to death by Herod, and so, in the highest sense of the words, was made to drink of our Lord’s cup; and though St John was not brought to suffer martyrdom, yet his being scourged and imprisoned by the council at Jerusalem, Acts v. 18, 40. put into a cauldron of burning oil at Ephesus, Euseb. lib. iii. c. 18. and banished into “Patmos for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ,” Rev. i. 9. may well be supposed to be some part of that bitter cup which our Saviour drank, and that he who underwent such torments, as nothing but a miracle could deliver him from, may, with very great justice, be esteemed a martyr. Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

†³ The words in the text are,—“The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them; but it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister,” Matth. xx. 25, 26.; and from hence some have inferred, that our Saviour forbids them who will be his disciples, or

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strove to exercise their utmost power and dominion over their subjects; whereas, who-ever expected to be great and chief among his followers must be a servant to the rest, according to his own example, who came, not to take state upon him, but to serve others, and even to lay down his life for their redemption.

As he drew near to Jericho, attended with a numerous company, one Bartimeus, who had long sat by the way-side begging, hearing the noise of a vast crowd of people passing by, and being informed that Jesus of Nazareth was among them (with † another blind man who begged along with him), called aloud upon Jesus to have mercy upon him. The people who accompanied our Lord, supposing that the man asked an alms, bade him cease his noise; but the benefit which he desired was of greater moment, and therefore he raised his voice, and with more importunity cried, "Thou Son of David, have mercy upon me!" Which when our Lord perceived, he commanded both him and his companion to be brought before him; and upon their declaring what favour they expected, he touched their eyes, and immediately they received their sight, and followed him, glorifying God, as indeed all the company did who had been eye-witnesses of this miracle.

As our Lord was passing through Jericho, a certain man, named Zaccheus, of great wealth and figure among the publicans, was not a little desirous to see him: but as he was a man of a low stature, and could not gratify his curiosity in the crowd, he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree, where he could not fail of having a full view of him. When our Saviour came near the place, he called him by his name, and bade him come down, because he intended to be his guest that day: Whereupon Zaccheus received him with the greatest expressions of joy and respect, whilst others could not forbear reflecting upon him for entering the house of a man of so scandalous a profession. But, notwithstanding all their censures, our Saviour, who, from the intuition of his heart, as well as his own declaration, knew him to be a just and charitable man, pronounced him and his family in a state of salvation, and that he, though a publican

the subjects of his kingdom, the exercise of all civil and ecclesiastical dominion. But if it be considered, that civil government was, from the beginning of the world, instituted by God (and therefore called his ordinance, Rom. xiii. 2.) for the punishment of evil doers, and for the defence of those that do well; that Christianity, when it came into the world, made no alteration in things of this nature, but left the magistrate, after his conversion, still bearing the sword in the same manner as he did before; and that the exercise of his power is a thing so sacred, as to intitle, not only princes, but even their deputed ministers of justice, to the style of gods in Scripture; it must needs be allowed, that what is reputed so honourable, and found so beneficial, so strict a bond of human virtue, and so firm a guard against all kinds of wickedness, can never be forbidden in any Christian commonwealth. And, in like manner, since among the gifts, distributed for the use of the church, we read of governments, 1 Cor. xii. 28. and find mention made of "those who are set over us in the Lord," 1 Thess. v. 12. to whom we must yield obedience, and submit ourselves, Heb. xiii. 7, 17.; since we find that the apostles had the rod, 1 Cor. iv. 21. and power given of the Lord to deliver to Satan, 1 Cor. v. 5. and to revenge all disobedience, 2 Cor. x. 6.; and since, in the nature of the thing, it is every whit as impossible for a church to subsist without ecclesiastical government, as it is for a state without civil, it must needs

follow, that the one is as necessary, and of Divine institution, as much as the other. All therefore that our Saviour can be presumed to forbid in these words, is such a dominion, whether in church or state, as is attended with tyranny, oppression, and a contempt of the subjects that live under it. Such, for the most part, was the government that obtained in eastern countries; and therefore, in contraposition to this, our spiritual rulers are put in mind that they "feed the flock which is among them, taking the oversight thereof, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, neither as being lords of God's inheritance, but ensamples to the flock," 1 Pet. v. 2, 3. that their highest station in the church is not so much a place of dignity, as a charge and office, which subjects them to the wants and necessities of those they rule over; and that the most honourable post they can have in Christ's kingdom, is only a larger ministry and attendance upon others; for, "Who is Paul? Who is Apollos? but ministers by whom ye believed," 1 Cor. iii. 4. "For we preach not ourselves (says the apostle to the Corinthians), but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus's sake." 2 Cor. iv. 5. *Whitby's and Beausobre's Annotations.*

† St Mark and St Luke both make mention only of one blind man, the son of Timeus, upon this occasion; but this they doubtless did, because he was better known than the other, and bore the greater part in this transaction. *Beausobre's Annotations.*

and an alien to the commonwealth of Israel, was nevertheless one of those to whom the promises † made unto Abraham did belong.

The nearer they came to Jerusalem, the more the disciples began to think that their Master had taken that journey to the passover, on purpose to seat himself upon his throne, and assume his regal authority; and therefore, to cure their minds of all such thoughts, he propounded a parable †² to them, “of a certain great man, born heir to a kingdom, and going into a far country to take possession of it; but, before he departed, calling his servants together, and giving each a sum of money to trade withal until he should return. The reason of his journey to this foreign land was, because his own countrymen, over whom he had a right to reign, were obstinately set against him, and disclaimed him for their king: When therefore he had obtained his new kingdom, and was returned home, he first called his servants, with whom he had intrusted his money, to an account, rewarding the diligent with gifts proportionate to their improvements, and punishing the negligent with perpetual imprisonment; and then taking cognizance of his countrymen, who, upon his going to be enthroned in another kingdom, disclaimed all obedience to him, he ordered them, in his presence, to be put

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

† Whether Zaccheus was a Jew or Gentile, our commentators are not agreed. The majority of them account him a Jew; but the words of our Blessed Saviour, “This day salvation is come to this house, forasmuch as he also is the son of Abraham,” Luke xix. 9. do very much incline us to think the contrary. “Abraham believed,” we are told, “and it was imputed to him for righteousness,” Rom. iv. 22. And therefore Zaccheus is here called his son, because he readily believed in the Divine mission of our Saviour Christ: “For the seed of Abraham was not that only which is of the law, but that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,” Rom. iv. 16. It is not to be doubted, therefore, but that this day, in pursuance of our Lord’s declaration, Zaccheus was fully converted to the Christian faith; but whether he was afterwards ordained by St Peter to be bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine, is not so very clear from Church-history; but that they who advance this notion may be supposed to have confounded him with another Zaccheus, bishop of that church, who lived in the second century. *Calmet’s Commentary.*

[The question started in this note is of very little importance; but I cannot help thinking that it should be decided otherwise than it has been by our author and Calmet. Our Saviour says expressly, that he was not sent but to the *lost sheep of the house of Israel*; he forbids his apostles to preach to the *Gentiles* or *Samaritans*; the apostles accordingly avoided the Gentiles till St Peter’s vision of the *great sheet*, &c. the publicans were in general native Jews; and therefore it appears to me indisputable that Zaccheus was a Jew.]

†² This parable, we may observe, consists of two parts. The former of which is contained in Luke xix. 12, 14, 15, to 27. and relates to the rebellious subjects of this prince, who “went into a far country to receive a kingdom; the latter is included in the 13th, 15th, and so on to the 27th verse, and relates to this prince’s servants, to whom he had committed his money for them to improve in his absence; and the explication of the whole is generally supposed to be this:—The nobleman or prince here is our Lord

himself, the eternal Son of God; his going into a far country to receive a kingdom, is his ascension into heaven, to sit down at the right-hand of the Divine Majesty, and take possession of his mediatorial kingdom; his servants may be either his apostles and disciples, who, upon his return, were to give an account of the progress of his Gospel; or Christians in general, who, for every talent, whether natural or acquired, are accountable. His citizens are, unquestionably, the Jews, who not only rejected him with scorn, but put him to an ignominious death; and his return, is the day of his fierce wrath and vengeance upon the Jewish nation, which came upon them about forty years after this time, and was indeed so very terrible as to be a kind of emblem and representation of that great day of accounts, when he will render “to every one according to his works.” It is observed, however, by some commentators farther, that our Lord took the rise of this parable from the custom of the kings of Judea (such as Herod the Great, and Archelaus his son), who usually went to Rome to receive their kingdom from Cæsar, without whose permission and appointment they durst not take the government into their hands. In the case of Archelaus indeed, the resemblance is so great, that almost every circumstance of the parable concurs in him. He was this *εὐγενής*, or man of great parentage, as being the son of Herod the Great. He was obliged to go into a far country, i. e. to Rome, to receive his kingdom of the emperor Augustus. The Jews, who hated him because of his cruel and tyrannical reign, sent their messengers after him, desiring to be freed from the yoke of kings, and reduced to a province of Rome. Their complaint however was not heard: he was confirmed in the kingdom of Judea; and, when he returned home, tyrannized for ten years over those that would have shook off his dominion: but then there is this remarkable difference between his case and that in the parable, that the Jews, upon their second complaint to Cæsar, prevailed against him, and procured his banishment to Vienna. *Calmet’s Commentary*, and *Beausobre’s* and *Whitby’s* Annotations.

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to death, as so many rebels;" intimating hereby, both the punishment of negligent Christians, and the destruction of the contumacious Jews.

By the time that our Lord arrived at Bethany, Lazarus had now been four days dead † and buried; and several friends and others from Jerusalem were come to condole †² with the two sisters, Martha and Mary, for the loss of their brother. Upon the first news of our Lord's approach, the two sisters, attended with some of the company that was in the house, went out to meet him; and pouring out a flood of tears for the loss of their dear brother, fell prostrate at his feet, and wished, over and over again, that he had come a little sooner; for then they were certain that he would not have died. The sight of their tears and sorrow, accompanied with the lamentations of their followers, affected the Son of God so, that he groaned within himself; and then demanding where they had laid the body †³, he followed them to the place, sympathizing with their sorrow, and weeping as well as they, which made some of the company remark how well he loved him, and others wonder why he did not prevent his death †⁴. When he was come to the grave †⁵, and had ordered the stone to be removed from it, (after a short address of adoration and thanksgiving to his Father †⁶ for his continual re-

† It was customary among the Jews (as Dr Lightfoot tells us from Maimonides and others) to go to the sepulchres of their deceased friends, and visit them for three days; for so long they supposed that their spirits hovered about them: But when once they perceived that their visage began to change, as it would in three days in these countries, all hopes of a return to life were then at an end. After a revolution of humours, which, in seventy-two hours, is completed, their bodies tend naturally to putrefaction, and therefore Martha had reason to say, that her brother's body (which appears by the context to have been laid in the sepulchre the same day that he died) would now, in the fourth day, begin to stink. *Whitby's* and *Hammond's* Annotations.

†² The time of mourning for departed friends was anciently, among the Jews, of longer continuance. For Jacob they mourned forty days, Gen. l. 3. and for Aaron and Moses thirty, Numb. xx. 29. and Deut. xxxiv. 8. For persons of an inferior quality, the days, very probably, were fewer, but some they had for all, and the general term, both among the Jews and Gentiles, was seven; for so Ovid brings in Orpheus lamenting the death of his wife:

Septem tamén ille diebus

Squalidus in ripâ, Cereris sine munere, sedit:

Cura, dolorque animi, lacrymæque, alimenta fuère.

Metam. lib. x.

An expression not unlike that in the royal Psalmist,—"My tears have been my meat day and night," Psalm xlii. 3. During this time, their neighbours and friends came to visit them, and to alleviate their sorrows with the best arguments they could. They pray with them; they read with them the xlixth Psalm: Pray for the soul of the dead, and distribute their comforts in proportion to their loss; but nobody opened his mouth until the afflicted person had first spoke, because Job's three friends who came to comfort him, we find did the same, Job ii. 13. All which ceremonies made the concourse to Martha's house, at this time, the greater, and gave more Jews an opportunity to be the eye-witnesses of her brother's re-

surrection. *Pool's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations, and *Basnage's* History of the Jews, lib. v. c. 23.

†³ This our Saviour could not but know, who knew all things, even the secrets of mens hearts; yet he thought proper thus to ask, that being conducted by them to the sepulchre, there might be no resemblance of any fraud or confederacy. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†⁴ The words in the text are,—“Some of them said, could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?” John xi. 37. which some imagine were spoken only in admiration, that having given sight to a blind man, that was a mere stranger to him, he did not cure his sick friend: But others conceive a vile sarcasm in the words, as if they went about to weaken his reputation, in a miracle wherein he had manifestly shewn his Divine power, because he did not preserve his friend from dying. *Pool's* Annotations.

†⁵ The common form of a burial place among the ancient Jews was a vault hewn out of a rock, six cubits long, and four broad, in which eight other little cells or niches (or, as some say, thirteen) were usually made, as so many distinct receptacles for the bodies that were to be laid in them. The mouth or entrance of this vault was closed with a large stone, which, whenever they buried any, was removed; and our Saviour here ordered the removal of that which lay upon Lazarus, to make the miracle appear more evident, because it would have looked more like an apparition than a resurrection, had Lazarus come forth when the door of his sepulchre was so firmly shut. *Goodwin's* Jewish Antiquities, and *Pool's* Annotations.

†⁶ As our Blessed Saviour, in virtue of his union with God the Father, had naturally, and in himself, a power of working miracles, there was no need for his addressing himself to heaven every time that he did any: However, upon this, and some other occasions, we find him praying to God under the title of his Father, that all the company might know that what he did was by a Divine, not diabolical, power, and that God, in granting his petition, acknowledged him to be his Son. *Beausobre's* Annotations.

diness to hear him), he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth;" whereupon he that was dead immediately arose from his bed of darkness, and in such sound health, that when his grave-clothes were unloosed, he was able to walk along with them to Bethany.

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

This great and apparent miracle caused the utmost surprise and astonishment among all the spectators, and the greatest part of them was, from that time, convinced and believed on him; but others, more obstinate, went and reported the thing to the Pharisees at Jerusalem, who thereupon called together their Sanhedrim; where, after some solemn debate, it was concluded, "That whether the man was a prophet sent from God or not, for fear of giving any umbrage to the Roman powers †, it was highly expedient that he should die, rather than that the whole nation, for his sake, should incur the danger of being ruined." And from that time they entered into a combination to have him apprehended and put to death; but as "his hour was not yet come," at present he declined their fury by retreating from the public, and retiring to a little place called Ephraim †², in the tribe of Benjamin, where he continued for a few days with his apostles, until the time of the passover was approaching.

Six days before that solemn feast began, our Lord, in his way to Jerusalem, called at Bethany, where he was kindly entertained at supper †³ by the two sisters of Lazarus, Martha and Mary. Martha, according to her custom, dressed the supper, but Lazarus, whom he had raised, was one of the company that sat at table with him, while Mary, to express her love and bounty, took a vial of the most valuable essence, made of spikenard †⁴, and pouring it upon his feet, anointed them, and wiped them with her hair, so

† The Jews, seeing the miracles which Jesus did, (this especially of raising Lazarus) did greatly fear, lest, taking upon him the public character of the Messiah, he would attempt to make himself king, and, by the admiration which he had gained among the people, be quickly enabled to accomplish his ends, unless he was timely prevented. If then he was permitted to go on in his pretensions, the consequence seemed visible to them, that the Romans, to whom they were already subject, would look upon this as a rebellion, and so be provoked to come with an army, and destroy them utterly. That this was their fear is evident from the many groundless objections which they made against our Saviour, as that "he forbade to give tribute to Cæsar, and that he made himself a king," and so opposed the title of Tiberius. Not that they desired the continuance of Cæsar's dominion over them, but the apprehension of a still farther conquest from the Romans made them unwilling to provoke them, and that more especially, because they had an ancient tradition, that one Armolus (which is by an easy change Romulus), before the end of the world, would come and destroy them. This seems to be but the depravation of some prophecy from God, which foretold the coming of the Romans in the last days (meaning thereby the days of the Messiah) to destroy them. It demonstrates, however, that they both believed and expected that the Romans were the people from whom the change of their religion, and the total subversion of their government, were to come, and for this reason they were, upon all occasions, so very fearful to offend them. But herein they were sadly mistaken: For the prophecy of the Romans coming to destroy their temple and nation was fulfilled, not by their letting Christ alone, or be-

lieving in him, but by their thus opposing and conspiring against him. *Hammond's Annotations.*

†² It was situated between Bethel and Jericho, about twenty miles to the north of Jerusalem, *Josephus de Bello*, lib. v. c. 8.

†³ Some interpreters are of opinion, that this was the same supper which our Saviour was invited to in the house of Simon the leper; that St John has related it in its proper place as a thing which happened six days before the passover; but that the other evangelists have mentioned it, by way of recapitulation, to shew what might be the probable occasion of Judas's treachery, even his vexation for being disappointed of the money that might have been made of this precious ointment, had it been sold and put in the bag for him to purloin. But others suppose that this supper was different from that which is mentioned Matth. xxvi. 6. and Mark xiv. 3. 1st, Because this was in the house of Lazarus, John xii. 2. that in the house of Simon the leper, Matth. xxvi. 6. 2dly, Here Mary anoints the feet of Christ, John xii. 3. there a woman not named pours ointment on his head, Matth. xxvi. 7. 3dly, This supper was six days before the passover, John xii. 1. that only two, Matth. xxvi. 2. Mark xiv. 1. and if the suppers were not the same, the Mary that anointed Christ's feet here, and the woman that anointed his head there, were not the same. *Calmet's Commentary, Beausobre's and Whilby's Annotations.*

†⁴ Nard, or spikenard, is a plant that grows in the Indies, with a very slender root, a stalk small and long, and several ears, or spikes, even with the ground, from whence it has the name of spikenard. The Indian nard (if it be right) must be of a yellowish colour, inclining towards purple, with long spikes, and

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that the whole house was filled with the fragrantcy of its perfume. This action Judas Iscariot, who afterwards betrayed his master, and had, at that time, the custody of the bag, wherein money, for charitable and other necessary uses, was kept, highly blamed, as a piece of prodigality, in throwing away what might have been sold for three hundred pence †, and given to the poor; not that he valued the poor, but because he was a greedy wretch, who was always purloining some part of the public money to himself. Our Saviour therefore, who knew the sincerity of Mary's, and the naughtiness of Judas's heart, in a very gentle reply, commended what she had done as a seasonable ceremony †² to solemnize his approaching death, but blamed the other's pretended concern for the poor, since objects of this kind they had always with them, but his continuance among them was not to be long. While they were sitting at this supper, great numbers of Jews, out of curiosity, came to Bethany, not only to have a sight of Jesus, but of Lazarus likewise, whom he had raised from the dead; but when the Sanhedrim understood that the resurrection of Lazarus occasioned many people to believe on Jesus †³, they consulted how to destroy him likewise.

In the meantime, Jesus, having tarried all night at Bethany, set forward next morning with his disciples, and others attending him, on his way to Jerusalem. When he came to a place called Bethphage †⁴, on the side of Mount Olivet †⁵, he sent two of his disciples into the village, to bring from thence an ass and her colt, * which was not yet

the bristles of its spikes large and odoriferous. Of the blade or spike of this nard the ancients were used to make a perfume of great esteem, and when genuine very precious. Pliny tells us [Nat. Hist. lib. xii.] there were nine several herbs which imitated nard, and that the great price it carried tempted many to adulterate it; but where it was found pure and unsophisticated, there it obtained the name of *nardus pistica*, which is the epithet that occurs in Mark xiv. 3, and John xii. 3. unless, as some think, it may be a mistake in the copiers for *spicata*. Calmet's Dictionary under the word, and Whitby's and Hammond's Annotations on Mark xiv. 3.

† As the Roman penny was sevenpence half-penny of our money, so "three hundred pence" must amount to nine pounds, seven shillings, and sixpence.

†² It was a custom, in these eastern countries, for kings and great persons to have their bodies, at their funerals, embalmed with odours and sweet perfumes; and, in allusion hereunto, our Saviour here declares of Mary, that she, to testify her faith in him as her King and Lord, had, as it were before-hand, embalmed his body with precious ointment for his burial.

†³ Never was their rage and malice more unreasonable than this; for admitted that Christ had broke the Sabbath and spoken blasphemy, yet what had Lazarus done? No crime was ever alleged against him; and yet these rulers of the people conspire to put him to death, merely to preserve their own honour and reputation. But see the Providence of God, which, notwithstanding all their contrivances, was pleased to preserve him, as a monument of his glory, and a testimony of the miracle which Jesus performed on him, thirty years after our Saviour's death. Pool's and Whitby's Annotations, and Taylor's Life of Christ.

†⁴ Bethphage signifies the house of figs, or dates,

and might, very probably, have its name from the several trees of these kinds that grew there. It was a small village of the priests, situate in Mount Olivet, and, as it seems, somewhat nearer Jerusalem than Bethany. Beausobre's Annotations, and Wells's Geography of the New Testament.

†⁵ This place, doubtless, had its name from the great number of olive trees that grew upon it. It lay a little without Jerusalem, on the east side of it, about five furlongs from the city, says Josephus; but he must be understood of the very nearest part of it, since St Luke makes the distance to be a Sabbath-day's journey, i. e. eight furlongs, or a mile, unless we suppose that he means the summit of the hill from which our Saviour ascended, Acts. i. 12. Mr Maundrell tells us, that he and his company, going out of Jerusalem at St Stephen's gate, and crossing the valley of Jehoshaphat, began immediately to ascend the mountain; that being got above two thirds of the way up, they came to certain grottos, cut with intricate windings and caverns under ground, which were called the sepulchres of the prophets; that a little higher up were twelve arched vaults under ground, standing side by side, and built in memory of the apostles, who are said to have compiled their creed in this place; that, sixty paces higher, they came to the place, where Christ is said to have uttered his prophecy concerning the final destruction of Jerusalem; and, a little on the right-hand to another, where he is said to have dictated a second time the Lord's prayer to his disciples; that, somewhat higher, is the cave of a saint, called Pelagia; a little above that a pillar, denoting the place where an angel gave the Blessed Virgin three days warning of her death; and, at the top of all, the place of our Blessed Lord's ascension. Wells's Geography of the New Testament.

* It is well remarked by Grotius, that such animals as were never employed in the service of men, were wont to be chosen for sacred purposes, insomuch,

backed, that, to accomplish a remarkable prophecy (a), he might ride thereon to Jerusalem ||. The disciples † did as they were ordered; and having mounted their master on the colt, he proceeded, as it were, in triumph towards the city, amidst the loud acclamations of an innumerable multitude, whilst crouds of people came forth to meet him with branches †² of palm-trees in their hands, some spreading their garments * in the

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark iii. 23 Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

that the very heathens thought those things and sacrifices most proper for the service of their gods, which had never been put to profane uses. Thus the Philistines returned the ark in a new cart, drawn by heifers that had never before undergone the yoke, 1 Sam. vi. 7. and thus Apollo's priest admonished Æneas:

Nunc grege de intacto septem mactare juvencos
Præstiterit, ————— *Æn. vi.*

But the chief design that our Saviour might have in the orders which he gave his disciples, was, that the prophecy might, by this means, receive its full completion. "Tell ye the daughter of Sion, behold thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt, the fole of an ass." The former part of the verse is taken from Isa. lxii. 11. and the latter from Zech. ix. 9. Both by the Jews are acknowledged to relate to the Messiah, and, with regard to the latter, R. Joseph was wont to say, "May the Messiah come, and may I be worthy to sit under the shadow of the tail of his ass!" *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Surenhusii Concil. in Loc. ex V. T. apud Matthæum*.

(a) Isa. lxii. 11. Zech. ix. 9.

|| A great contest there is among learned men, whether our Lord rode upon the ass, or the colt, or on both alternately. Those who contend for his riding upon both, observe from the words of the prophet Zechariah, chap. ix. 9. that mention is made of riding both "upon an ass, and a colt, the fole of an ass;" and from St Matthew, chap. xxi. 7. they observe farther, that the disciples, having brought the ass and the colt which our Saviour had sent them for, "put on them their clothes, and set him thereon." Since therefore the relation of St Matthew thus literally agrees with the prophecy of Zechariah, and both expressly assert, that our Saviour did ride upon the ass as well as the colt, they see no reason why these texts should not be taken in their most plain and obvious meaning, and do thence infer, that, for the more exact fulfilling of the prophecy, our Saviour did actually ride part of the way upon the one and the remaining part upon the other. The generality of interpreters however are against this. They suppose, that, as there was no occasion for our Saviour's riding upon both in so short a journey, and as the other three evangelists only make mention of the colt, there seems to be a necessity for admitting of the figure, called *enallage numeri* in this place; and that, as when we read, that the "ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat," Gen. viii. 4. we understand only upon one of them; so here, when St Matthew tells us, that the disciples brought "the ass, and the colt, and put their clothes on them," by ἐνάνα αὐτῶν, he must necessarily mean, ἐνάνα ἐνδὲς αὐτῶν, upon one of them, i. e. the colt, as the words of the prophecy itself

will fairly bear: Nor was there any other reason for bringing the mother along with it, but that foals will not usually go without their dams. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, part i. and *Surenhusii Concil. in Loca ex V. T. apud Matthæum*.

† Very remarkable is our Saviour's prescience, even as to the most minute matters, in the orders which he gives his disciples, viz. 1. You shall find a colt; 2. On which no man ever sat; 3. Bound with his mother; 4. *In bivio*, or where two ways meet; 5. As you enter into the village; 6. The owners of which will at first seem unwilling that you should unbind him; 7. But when they hear that I have need of him, they will let him go. And no less remarkable is the cheerful obedience of these disciples to a command, which carnal reasoning might have started many objections against, and which nothing less than a steadfast persuasion, that he who sent the message would be sure to give success to it, could have prevailed upon them to execute as they did, without any demur or delay. *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. i.

†² At the feast of tabernacles, it was a custom among the Jews, not only to sing hosannas with the greatest joy, but also to carry palm branches in their hands, Lev. xxiii. 40. and to desire (as the Jews still wish at the celebration of this feast) that they may rejoice in this manner at the coming of the Messiah. Nor was it only at this festival, but upon any other occasion of solemn rejoicing, that the Jews made use of this ceremony: For so we find that, upon the enemy's evacuating the tower of Jerusalem, Simon and his men "entered into it, with thanksgiving, and branches of palm trees, and with harps, and cymbols, and with viols, and hymns, and songs," 1 Maccab. xiii. 51. Nay, the very same manner of expressing their joy prevailed among other nations as well as the Jews; for so Herodotus relates, that they who went before Xerxes, as he passed over the Hellespont, strowed the way with myrtle branches: And therefore we need less wonder that we find such of the company, as were by our Blessed Saviour's miracles convinced of his being their king, and the promised Messiah, testifying their joy upon this his inauguration into his kingdom, in such a manner as they, as well as other nations, upon such joyful occasions were accustomed to. *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Surenhusii Concil. ex. V. T. apud Matthæum*.

* It was a common practice among the people of the East, upon the approach of their kings and princes, to spread their vestments upon the ground for them to tread or ride over. In conformity to which custom we find the captains, when they proclaimed Jehu king, putting their garments under him, 2 Kings ix. 13. and Plutarch relating, that when Cato left his soldiers to return to Rome, they spread their clothes

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way, others cutting down branches, and strowing them where he was to pass, and all, as it were, with one voice, crying †, "Hosanna to the Son of David! blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! hosanna in the highest!"

In this triumphant manner they advanced till they came to the descent of Mount †² Olivet, when the whole body of disciples, being transported with the honours shewn to their Master, broke out into raptures of thanksgivings, and loud doxologies to God, for all the mighty works which they had seen; while the whole body of the people, as well those that went before, as those that followed after, joined with the disciples in their hosannas and acclamations; so that, when some Pharisees, being envious of his glory, desired him to command their silence, "if they should be silent, he told them, †³ the very stones would proclaim his praise."

But notwithstanding all this glorious procession, as he advanced nearer to Jerusalem, so as to have a full view of the city and temple, he paused, and looked stedfastly on the city, and then, with tears in his eyes, †⁴, made this lamentation over it: "Oh! that thou hadst known, at least in this thy appointed day, the things conducing to thy peace; but now, alas! they are hidden from thine eyes. For the fatal time shall come, when thy enemies * shall throw up trenches about thee, hem thee in on every side, destroy

in the way, which was an honour (as he observes) then done to few emperors. But the Jews that accompanied our Saviour at this time, looked upon him as greater than any emperor; as a prince, that was come to rescue them from the Roman yoke, and reduce all nations under their subjection; and therefore in this manner they chose to testify their homage and veneration of their universal monarch, making now a public entry into his capital of Jerusalem. *Whitby's Annotations.*

† *Hosanna*, or rather *hosa-na*, is an Hebrew word, which signifies *Save, I beseech thee*, and was a common acclamation which the Jews used in their feast of Tabernacles, not only in remembrance of their past deliverance from Egypt, but in hopes likewise of a future one, by the coming of the Messiah. Now the reason why the acclamations upon this occasion ran rather in these words, than in the common form of *Long live the King*, or the like, was because, in the character which the prophet gives of the Messiah, he is called a Saviour, or one bringing salvation to them, *Zech. ix. 9.* And therefore to shew the excellency of this, above all other kings, the people address him in words taken from the Psalmist, "Help us now, O Lord, send us now prosperity," *Psal. cxviii. 25.* But because *hosanna* is likewise a form of blessing, and in the inauguration of princes people are always pleased with the rightful succession, therefore they adjoin "hosanna to the son of David," i. e. the Lord prosper, and heap favours and blessings upon him. Now, because God had promised the Jewish nation a king descended from that royal line, therefore they continue their good wishes, "blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord;" and because again it is natural for men in such transports to reiterate their joyful acclamations, even as if they desired to make them reach heaven as well as earth, therefore it is added "hosanna in the highest!" *Hammond's* and *Beausobre's Annotations*, and *Surenhusii Concil. ex V. T. apud Matthæum.*

†² Between this Mount and the city of Jerusalem

there lay nothing but only the valley of Jehoshaphat, through which ran the brook Kedron. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†³ This is a proverbial expression, and signifies no more than that God was determined to glorify our Saviour that day; and therefore, if these his followers should be prevailed upon to hold their peace, and say nothing in his praise, God would find out some other means (though not so competent perhaps) to make it effectually be known. *Beausobre's* and *Whitby's Annotations.*

†⁴ The tears which our Saviour shed upon this occasion were such as proceeded from a profound charity, and deep commiseration of the evils that were coming upon Jerusalem; in both which virtues he came to be an example to us, and therefore his behaviour in this respect could not be unworthy of himself. They farther shew, that the calamities which befel that impious city might have been avoided, had they made a right use of the time of their visitation; otherwise his tears may rather be looked upon as the tears of a crocodile than those of true charity and commiseration. *Whitby's Annotations.*

* How exactly this prediction was fulfilled by the Romans, we may learn by the Jewish historian, who not only tells us, that in this very Mount Olivet, where our Lord spake these words, the Romans first pitched their tents when they came to the final overthrow of Jerusalem; but that when Vespasian began the siege of it, he encompassed the city round about, and kept them in on every side; that to this purpose (how impracticable soever the enterprise might seem) Titus prevailed with the soldiers to build a wall of thirty-nine furlongs, quite round the city, with thirteen turrets in it, which, to the wonder of the world, was completed in three days: and that when this was done, all possibility of escaping was cut off, and the greatest distress, that ever befel a city, ensued, whereof that author gives us a very lively, but most dolorous account. *Joseph. de Bello, lib. vi. c. 13, &c.*

thy children, demolish thee, and * not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou wouldst not know the time of thy visitation." †

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

THE OBJECTION.

“AND a strange visitation, no doubt, it was, when the great and long expected King of the Jews made his solemn entry into the capital of his dominions in so inglorious and absurd a manner. Had he been carried indeed in a triumphal chariot, with the nobles of the nation attending him, and heralds before proclaiming his great and wonderful acts; nay, had he been but mounted upon a tolerable horse, with a little riding furniture to set him off, and a company of honest yeomen, each on his own steed, to make up the cavalcade, something then might have been said to the matter: But to represent him riding upon an ass, the most contemptible of all creatures, without either bridle or saddle, and nothing but an old coat or two thrust under him; without one person of figure in his retinue, and nothing but a noisy rabble running before, and bauling out, “Hey for our King, for our King for ever;” this is making such a farce of the whole matter, and setting our Saviour out in so ridiculous a dress, as badly comports with the gravity of his behaviour upon all other occasions. Well might the town be in an uproar, to see a king inaugurated in this mock manner; and well might the mob, when the ferment of their joy was over, reflect on what they had done, and turn their hosannas into ‘crucify him.’ But what colour of excuse can we make for the four evangelists, who have all related this part of our Saviour’s history so much to his disadvantage, and (a) thence given occasion to such an excess of profane wit and ridicule?

Well had it been for their credit, if the three first had omitted this account of our Saviour’s entry, as they have done that of his raising up Lazarus from the dead. In this St John stands alone, but not without some suspicion of the truth of his narrative, when he represents the very person, whom in the beginning of his Gospel he extolled so gloriously, sinking into a passion below the dignity of some heathen sages, and foolishly (b) weeping for the loss of a friend, whom that very moment he was going to restore; and when he represents his friend, who ‘was dead, coming forth from his sepulchre, though (c) bound hand and foot with his grave-clothes’ (which is not so easy, one would think, to be done), and at the same time having ‘his face (that it might not be known who he was) bound about with a napkin.’

These circumstances look a little oddly, and seem to impair the strength of the miracle; as our Saviour’s (d) curing the man that was born blind (another piece of history wherein St John stands alone), by a kind of whimsical eye-salve made of dirt and spittle, sounds not a little romantic, unless we may suppose, (e) that underhand he

* How exactly this was likewise fulfilled, the same historian relates, viz. that Titus, having ordered the soldiers to lay the city level with the ground, and to leave nothing standing but three of the most famous turrets that overtopped the rest, as monuments to posterity of the Romans power and conduct in taking the place, his orders were so punctually executed, and all the rest laid so flat, that the place looked as if it had never been inhabited. *Joseph. de Bello, lib. vii. c. 18.*

† The word visitation may be taken either in a

good or bad sense; for either the mercies or judgments of God; but here it denotes the former, and particularly the dispensation of the Gospel, first by the ministry of John, then by the preaching of Christ himself, and afterwards by the labours of his Apostles and disciples. *Beausobre’s and Pool’s Annotations.*

(a) Bishop *Sherlock’s* 1vth Dissertation.

(b) John xi. 35.

(c) *Ibid.* ver. 44.

(d) John ix.

(e) *Woolsten’s* Discourses on the Miracles

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made use of a proper medicine, and had privately in his mouth some sanative and balsamic matter, which, dissolved in spittle, might effect the cure.

The truth is, whatever high commendations may be given of the Gospel of St John, as an history greatly conducive to our Saviour's honour, and calculated on purpose, as it were, to assert the doctrine of his divinity, yet it is no small objection to its authority, that the whole account of the woman taken in adultery, and brought before him, is supposed to be a forgery, and therefore omitted in the best copies; and if we look into some other passages during the same period, we shall soon perceive, that it falls infinitely short of the orthodox character which some have given it.

For when (according to St John) we find Christ declaring, that (a) 'He was to work the work of him that sent him; that (b) the doctrine which he taught was not his own, but his that sent him; and that he (c) spake not of himself, but as his Father had taught him so he spake,' can we think otherwise, than that he acknowledges his inferiority to the Deity, (d) as subject to the command of another, which the true God can never be; and as receiving his instructions from another, which, had he a Divine besides the human nature, he must have been the prime author of.

The very Socinians allow, that in respect of the commission which he had from God, the Scriptures might indulge him with a title extraordinary; and when (e) 'the Jews took up stones to stone him,' for assuming, as they thought, a co-equality with God, how is it that this beloved apostle of his brings him off? Why, by making him acknowledge himself to be God, in the same sense that judges and other great magistrates are so called, viz. (f) in virtue of the Divine authority wherewith they are invested.

Nay, well it were if St John were the only sacred penman who seems to impair the truth of Christ's divinity: But if we look into two other evangelists (g), we shall find them, on a very remarkable occasion, doing the same thing. For when the two sons of Zebedee came and requested of our Lord to have a certain pre-eminence in his future kingdom, these writers make him modestly decline all power of conferring such like honours and dignities as the peculiar prerogative of God alone: (h) 'To sit at my right-hand, and my left, is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them of whom it is prepared of my Father.' Words that he never would have spoken, say the ancient Arians, had he not been conscious of an inferiority.

But even besides these, there are other difficulties in the compass of this part of the evangelical history that we cannot so well account for. For if innocence is better than amendment, and there is no proportion in the numbers, why is 'there more (i) joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance?' If the 'Judge of all the earth cannot but do right, and will reward every one according to his works,' why does the householder, in the parable (k), make the wages of all the 'labourers in the vineyard, of those that wrought but one hour, and of those that bore the heat and burden of the day, equal?' If our Saviour, at other times, in his travels from Galilee to Jerusalem, met with no let, no incivility from the people of Samaria, why did they once, merely (l) 'because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem,' deny him the common rights of hospitality? And (to name no more) supposing the last was the greatest day of the feast of tabernacles, yet why should our Saviour, on that more than any other, cry out, (m) 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink?' Nor can we conceive where the passage is, or in what sense it is to be understood, that 'he who believeth in Christ shall out of his belly have rivers of living waters flowing'."

(a) John ix. 4.
(e) John x. 31.
(h) Matth. xx. 23.
(m) John vii. 37, 38.

(b) Ibid. vii. 16.
(f) Ibid. ver. 34, 35.
(i) Luke xv. 7.

(c) Ibid. viii. 28.
(g) Matth. xx. 20, and Mark x. 35.
(k) Matth. xx. 12.

(d) *Whitby* in locum.
(l) Luke ix. 53.

(a) At a former passover, when the people, in admiration of our Saviour's miracles, would have paid him kingly honours, he withdrew, and refused that unseasonable testimony of their zeal, because the accepting these honours then would have been liable to misrepresentation, and might have obstructed the efficacy of his preaching. But now that the course of his prophetic office was finished, and the time of his leaving the world, and returning to his Father, so near at hand, he thought it not amiss to accept of their readiness to acknowledge and proclaim his royal dignity, and himself to go up to Jerusalem in a more public manner than usual, that thereby he might exasperate his blood-thirsty enemies, and so draw on his intended passion.

From Mattin.
xiii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

ANSWER.

To exasperate his enemies indeed, a more pompous appearance might have been more conducive, and more agreeable to his regal dignity; but in this our Saviour was not left to his own option. Since the prophet, so long before, had prescribed the form of his entry into Jerusalem, as a characteristic of his being the true Messiah, there could be no deviating from it, even though he could have procured his numerous guards, and triumphal chariots, splendid attendants, and other ensigns of royalty, to adorn the day of his inauguration. (b) "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy King cometh unto thee! He is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." This is the prophecy whereby our Saviour was directed, at this time, in his approach to Jerusalem; and to justify his conduct in this particular, it may not be amiss to enquire a little into the true reason of it.

To this purpose we may observe with a learned prelate (c) of our own, that the law which God gave to the kings of Israel, whenever there should be any, (d) "not to multiply horses to themselves," was founded upon a special promise, that he would continue to be, as he had all along been, (e) their defence against their enemies; that this was a law wherein every prince that was to succeed to the government of Israel was concerned, and designed for a standing trial, both of prince and people, whether they had trust and confidence in God; that, while this law was observed, the troops of Israel were victorious, and, though few in number, and seemingly unfit for action, proved an overmatch for royal armies; that, when it came to be laid aside, and kings, as they declined in their confidence towards God, began to multiply their horses and chariots of war, they soon sunk in their military successes, till, at length, the whole land was carried away captive: And therefore, (f) "woe unto them, says the prophet, that stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many, and in horsemen, because they are strong, but look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord."

Now to apply this to the prophecy before us. Since the kings of Israel were obliged to renounce the assistance of horses and horsemen, and to depend on God for success in the day of battle; and since those who did so were their nation's deliverers, and those that did otherwise were destroyers of it; under which of these capacities, think we, should the king, whom God promised to the daughter of Jerusalem, come? Should he appear, as some of the late kings of Israel did, in all the pomp and pride of war, surrounded with horses and chariots, in direct opposition to the law of God? Or should he appear, like some of the ancient worthies, (g) "who by faith subdued kingdoms, and out of weakness were made strong?" Kings who feared God, and therefore feared no enemy, and who, though mounted on asses, were able to put to flight the thousands and ten thousands of chariots and horses that came against them? To resolve us in this enquiry, the prophet himself comes into our aid: For, immediately after his description of the promised King, he adds, (h) "and I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim,

(a) Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. i.

Fourth Dissertation, annexed to his Use and Intent of Prophecy.

(e) Ibid. xx. 1.

(f) Isaiah xxxi. 1.

(b) Zech. ix. 9.

(g) Heb. xi. 33, 34.

(c) Bishop Sherlock's

(d) Deut. xvii. 16.

(h) Zech. ix. 10.

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&c. or 5441.
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31, &c.
Vulg. Jer. 30.

and the horse from Jerusalem ;” plainly shewing, that the character given of the Messiah, viz. “ That he should ride on an ass,” was in opposition to the pride of their war-like kings, who, by their strength in chariots and horses, had ruined themselves and their people.

[“ This prophecy of Zechariah’s the Jews never understood of any other person than the Messiah. Jesus, therefore, by seating himself upon an ass’s colt, in order to go to Jerusalem, without any possible inducement of grandeur or convenience, openly declared himself to be that King who was to come, and at whose coming in that manner Zion was to rejoice. And so the disciples, if we may judge from what immediately followed, understood this proceeding ; for no sooner did they see their Master seated on the colt, than they broke out into transports of the highest joy, as if in this great sight they had the full contentment of their utmost wishes ; conceiving, as it should seem, the sanguine hope that the kingdom was this instant to be restored to Israel. They strewed the way which Jesus was to pass with the green branches of the trees which grew beside it ; a mark of honour in the East never paid but to the greatest emperors on occasions of the highest pomp : They proclaimed him the long-expected heir of David’s throne,—the Blessed One coming in the name of the Lord ; and they rent the skies with the exulting exclamation of ‘ Hosanna in the highest !’ On their way to Jerusalem, they were met by a great multitude from the city, whom the tidings had no sooner reached, than they ran out in eager joy to join in his triumph. When they reached Jerusalem, the whole city, then crouded with devout Jews and proselytes who had come from all quarters to keep the feast, was moved, says the evangelist. Through the throng of these astonished spectators, the procession passed, by the public streets, to the temple, where the sacred porticos immediately resound with the continued hosannas of the multitudes. The chief priests and scribes were greatly alarmed, as with their principles well they might, when, as on a former occasion, he drove out the traders ; but with a higher tone of authority calling the temple his *own* house, and saying—‘ My house is the house of prayer ; but ye have made it a den of thieves’ (a).”]

Thus necessary it was for the promised Messiah, and for our Saviour, consequently, who came in that character, to approach the daughter of Zion, riding on an ass, even though it were a creature more despicable than we imagine it. But, after all, it is mere prejudice, and too fond an attachment to the manners and customs of our own country, that make us conceive any thing contemptible in an ass, or any thing ridiculous or inconsistent with the gravity and dignity of our Blessed Saviour in riding upon one. For (b) if we look into other countries, particularly into Judea, we shall find persons of the highest distinction usually so mounted. We shall find (c) the chief governors of Israel described in the song of Deborah, as “ riding on white asses ;” and (d) the thirty sons of Jair, who was judge and prince of the country for two and twenty years, riding upon as many asses, and commanding in thirty cities. Nay, we shall find Absalom, though in other respects (e) a man of pomp, in the very day of battle (f) mounted on a mule, the colt of an ass, and on his coronation-day, Solomon provided with no better equipage. And therefore, we can never account it any reproach for the meek and humble Jesus, to ride into Jerusalem on the foal of an ass, when David, the greatest of his ancestors, and Solomon, the wisest, as long as he was wise, rode in the same manner.

(g) The persons who attended him in this procession were a mixed multitude, consisting of disciples and common people, such as were moved to do thus, from the doctrines and miracles which they had heard and seen, and were forward to pay him what

(a) *Horsley’s Sermons*, vol. iii. ed. i. p. 44, &c.
annexed to his *Use and Intent of Prophecy*.
(e) 2 Sam. xv. 1.

(f) *Ibid.* xviii. 9.

(b) *Bishop Sherlock’s Fourth Dissertation*,
(c) *Judg.* v. 10. (d) *Ibid.* x. 4.
(g) *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. i.

honour they could. They had no quality or outward splendour indeed, no titles or eminent posts to recommend them, but they were very remarkable for their sincerity and honest zeal, their hearty affection to Christ, and firm persuasion of his being the true Messiah; and these to him, who is "no respecter of persons," and who came to set up "a kingdom not of this world," rendered those tributes of praise and acknowledgment, though from men mean and insignificant as to any temporal respects, more acceptable, more becoming his character, and more truly for his honour, than any dissembled or interested homage of rulers or Rabbins, the greatest or wisest of the Sanhedrim, could have been; for external advantages are of no consideration with God, while they want good dispositions within to recommend them.

Whether this was the same multitude, or not another spirited up, that clamoured so loudly against our Blessed Saviour but five days after these joyful exclamations, it is much to be questioned; but, supposing it was, whoever considers the subtle management of men in post and power, and the easiness and servile fears usual in those of a mean depending condition, will not be much surprised at such a sudden change. Popular applause is at all times a very fickle and uncertain thing: but in the case before us, there were some incidents which might occasion this instability. Our Saviour, after his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, seemed to assume a kind of sovereignty: he purged the temple from its abuses, healed the diseases of the people, received the hosannas of the children, and, for some few days, preached, "exhorted, and rebuked with all authority;" so that, during this time, no one almost doubted but that he was the mighty Prince who was to "gird his sword upon his thigh," and bring salvation unto Israel. But when, instead of this, they saw him fallen into the hands of his enemies, and quite deserted by his friends; apprehended by the public officers as a common malefactor, haled from one high priest to another, and there blindfolded, spit upon, buffeted, and insulted; when, in the midst of all this distress, they saw him left alone, without any disciple to stand by him; any messenger from heaven, (as they might expect) or any exertion of his own power, to rescue him; nay, on the contrary, when they saw that one of his own servants had sold and betrayed him, another denied and abjured him, and all unanimously had fled and forsook him, and yet these were the persons who, for some years, had been his constant companions, and consequently were the best judges of his merit and pretensions: When the multitude, I say, saw matters reduced to this extremity, and that terror and desertion was on every side, while the rulers conspired to take away his life, it is no wonder that, at the instigation of these rulers, they changed their tone as they saw the scene change and their hopes vanish, and struck in with the prevailing party: For whoever has seen a great man disgraced at court, (even though before he was the nation's darling) may easily satisfy himself what very reeds the affections of the populace are; how apt they are to bend to every wind of faction and interest, and to be swayed by every calumny or malicious insinuation, even when most zealous, and seemingly most sincere.

If we take a view of the vast extent of the subject which the evangelists had before them, and the intended brevity of their books to make them more useful to the generality of mankind, we cannot but perceive that it was absolutely necessary for them to omit several things which must have occurred to their remembrance. The whole four Gospels bound together make not a large volume, but each singly is a very small book; and yet, besides the miracles of our Saviour, attended, as they are, with the circumstances of place and time, the names of the persons and the occasions of their being wrought, they have, in these small tracts, inserted an account of the wonderful manner of our Saviour's birth, the dangers of his infancy, the miraculous appearances of Providence in his favour, and his removals and journeyings from one place and country to another. They have recorded the substance of his doctrine in plain terms; have set down many parables spoken by him, together with their explications; and given us a full account

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
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of the mission of his twelve apostles, and the other seventy disciples. The cavils and questions of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians, together with his answers and solutions; the observations and reflections of the people; his public discourses before all, and his private instructions to his disciples; his predictions of his own sufferings; of the destruction of Jerusalem, and many other events; a long and particular account of his prosecution, condemnation, and crucifixion; as also of his resurrection and ascension; (not to mention the history of the birth, preaching, baptism, and sufferings of John the Baptist, his fore-runner) are all comprized in a short volume. And therefore, having such plenty of matter before them, they were obliged to be silent as to some particulars, after they had related others of the like nature, for fear of incurring that prolixity which they had determined to avoid. And hence it is easy to suppose, in behalf of the three first evangelists, that when they came to a certain period in their history of the ministry of Jesus, and observed that they had given a sufficient account of his doctrine and miracles, being to reserve a space for his last sufferings and resurrection, they thought proper to pass over in silence whatever happened between that period and his last journey to Jerusalem. Thus some have observed, that from the time when our Saviour returned into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan, which (as St John (*a*) tells us) was soon after the feast of the dedication, (and that was always observed in winter) to the time of his last going up to Jerusalem, a little before Easter, these three evangelists make no mention at all of any journeys or movings from thence; and yet from this country (according to St John's account) it was that Jesus afterwards came up to Bethany and raised Lazarus, and then (*b*) "went into the country near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples." And therefore since these sacred penmen, for the avoidance of prolixity, thought it not proper to take any notice of what passed in this interval of time, they could not (with any justness or propriety) introduce into their Gospels an account of the resurrection of Lazarus.

[It is indeed very unreasonable to urge as an objection to the truth of any fact recorded by one credible historian, the circumstance of its omission by others supposed to have had the same opportunities of information. It is peculiarly unreasonable in the present case, because St John is universally allowed to have written long after the other evangelists, with this view among others, that he might supply accounts of such important events in the life of our Lord as they had *omitted*; but it is certain that he hath not supplied them all. We have his own testimony, not only that "Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples," which he hath not recorded in his Gospel, but that, if they had every one been recorded, "he supposed that even the world itself could not contain the books that should have been written." Many of our Lord's miracles, therefore, were unavoidably omitted; and if each evangelist prescribed, as a rule to himself, to record nothing but what he had actually witnessed with his own eyes or heard with his own ears, it is easy to assign the reason for one evangelist recording one miracle, and omitting others equally great which are recorded by another. They could not always be every one of them present with their Lord, either when he wrought miracles or when he taught the people. Accordingly we find the restoration to life of Jairus's daughter recorded, though with circumstances somewhat different, by all the three first evangelists, and therefore very properly omitted by St John; but the restoration of the widow's son of Nain, though a miracle equally public and astonishing, is recorded by St Luke only. How is this accounted for? may the objector ask; a question to which the answer is obvious on the supposition that the evangelists were distinct and independent writers, who recorded each only what he had himself witnessed and distinctly remembered. St Matthew, St John, St Peter, and St Luke, were all with their Master when he was intreated by the ruler of the synagogue to come and lay his

(*a*) John x. 22.

(*b*) Ibid. xi. 54.

hand on his dying daughter ; but St Matthew and St Peter were probably not with him when he came nigh to the city of Nain, and therefore did not behold him restore the widow's son. On account of the length of time during which Lazarus had been dead, his resurrection is perhaps more extraordinary (if there could be degrees in such wonders) than either of the other two ; but as *Thomas* and not *Peter*, whose zeal and attachment generally appear most conspicuous, is represented as proposing to his fellow disciples to go and die with their Master, it is probable that neither Peter nor Matthew nor Luke was present at the resurrection of Lazarus. If so, and if they wrote independently of each other, and on the principle of recording each only what he had personally witnessed of the miracles of their Lord, the omission of this great miracle by the three first evangelists follows of course.]

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

But there is a farther reason which some learned men (a) have given us for their silence in this respect. They tell us, that, according to an ancient tradition, Lazarus lived thirty years after his being raised from the dead, and that, as the latest of these three evangelist wrote but fifteen years (b) after our Lord's ascension, they might think it a needless matter to mention a miracle concerning a person living so near Jerusalem, when the fame of it was so great, and so many witnesses living to attest it : Nor can they suppose but that, in point of prudence, the evangelists declined mentioning this story, for fear of exasperating the Jews, and giving their rage and malice a fresh provocation to cut off Lazarus. But now St John, undertaking to write his Gospel on purpose to supply the omissions of the former evangelists, above sixty years after our Lord's ascension, when, by the death of Lazarus, and most of the witnesses who were present at his resurrection, the fame of it might be much impaired, had good reason to perpetuate its memory by a full and particular rehearsal.

He had not, however, given us so fair and unexceptionable an account of the matter, had he not represented our blessed Saviour compassionating the circumstances of his friends, and weeping upon so sad an occasion as the death of Lazarus. For "there is something in human nature (as an ingenious author (c) elegantly expresses it) resulting from our very make and constitution while it retains its genuine form, and is not altered by vicious habits, or oppressed by stupidity, which renders us obnoxious to the pains of others, causes us to sympathise with them, and almost comprehends us in their case. This compassion appears eminently in those who, upon other accounts, are justly reckoned among the best of men. They who (of all writers) undertake to imitate nature most, often introduce even their heroes weeping. The tears of men are in truth very different from the cries and ejaculations of children ; they are silent streams, and flow from other causes ; commonly some tender, and perhaps philosophical reflections." And in the case now before us, there might be other considerations besides the loss of Lazarus, and the lamentation of his friends, that might draw from our Saviour these tears of compassion,

He might at that time be affected with the thought of the many afflictions to which human nature is liable in this imperfect state ; and his groans and inward grief might proceed from the want of faith observable in the sisters, and company attending them, and their diffidence of his ability to raise the dead, notwithstanding they had seen so many, so frequent, manifestations of a Divine and Omnipotent Power residing in him. He knew that the obstinacy and inveterate prejudices of some of the spectators, and of the generality of the Jewish people was such, that the astonishing miracle he was going to work would not have its due effect upon them. This recalled to his mind that scene of misery and desolation which he foresaw would overtake them, and therefore

(a) *Grotius* and *Whitby*, on John xii. (b) [This seems to be a mistake. See the Appendix to our author's Dissertation on the four evangelists and their writings.]
(c) *Religion of Nature Delineated*, sect. 6. prop. 17.

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he grieved, and sighed deeply, at the prospect of the calamities which that perverse people were bringing upon themselves, and which all his endeavours, his miracles and sufferings, could not prevent. So that, upon the whole, the concern which our Lord expressed upon this occasion, proceeded from the noblest motives, wisdom, goodness, friendship, compassion, and every view that is just and laudable, when he sympathised with his friends, and grieved with his enemies. [Our Lord was no Stoic, nor are the principles of Christianity the principles of Stoicism.]

With these genuine expressions of solemn grief and sorrow, our Saviour drew near to his friend's sepulchre, which, (as we may conjecture) was an hollow place hewn in a rock, whose entrance (which was closed with a stone) lay level with the surface of the earth: but then we have so imperfect an account of the funeral habits that were in use among the Jews, that we can form no notion how far Lazarus, when revived and set upon his feet, might be able of himself to walk to the mouth of his tomb *. In this, however, we may satisfy ourselves, that our Saviour, who was able to recal his soul from its separate state, and convey fresh life into his body almost putrified, could give that body, though bound hand and foot, a power of moving forward, even though we suppose, (as most of the ancients do) that herein he put himself to the expence of a second miracle, because the proper demonstration of the reality of the resurrection was, not to send any body into the tomb to unbind him, which might occasion a suspicion of some clandestine practice, but to have him come forth alive, in the presence of all the spectators, fairly, and without any change or alteration in his funeral dress but what was made before the people themselves, by our Saviour's saying, "loose him, and let him go."

That some or other in the company was ready enough upon this occasion to obey our Lord's commands can hardly be doubted; and therefore it is very wonderful, that (had there been any collusion in the matter) among so great a multitude, no one should have had sagacity enough to find it out. But the truth is, they none of them suspected any such thing. They none of them thought, that when a man had been four days buried there wanted any proof of his being dead. They none of them thought, that Christ was only a pretended worker of miracles; for how unwilling soever they were to own him for their Messiah, by long experience they were convinced that he was a person "mighty in word and deed."

Of all the wonderful deeds that we find recorded of him, there is none, I think, that is related so fully, and set off with so many circumstances to prevent the least suspicion of fraud, as that of his curing the man who was born blind. The evangelist has expended a whole chapter upon it, and therein acquainted us with some previous questions of his disciples which led to it; the uncommon manner of his performing it; the surprise and astonishment of the blind man's neighbours, when they saw such an alteration wrought in him; the man's open and undisguised relation of the matter, and repeated attestation of the greatness and reality of the cure; the great disturbance and perplexity which it gave the Jews; their examining, and cross-examining the man, who still continued firm and uniform in his account; their tampering with his parents, who avowed the truth of his being born blind; and at last (when they saw that they could prevail nothing, but the more they examined the more evidence they found) their rage and malice, which carried them to such a degree, as to excommunicate the poor man, and cast him out of their synagogue. These, and some more circumstances, are told in

* [In some places in Scotland the fashion of grave-clothes was such not many years ago, and perhaps is so still, that were the dead person restored to life, he would find no greater difficulty in walking in his grave-clothes than in his ordinary dress; though

the limbs of such bodies as I have seen so dressed were certainly wrapt up, though separately, in their grave-clothes; and this may be all that is meant (John xi, v. 44.) by the word *δέσμευτος*.]

such a plain convincing manner, as shews the whole story to be too well founded for any cavils or fictions to weaken or impair.

Our Saviour might have had some sanative balsam in reserve; but what would all the balsam in the world have availed towards the cure of the distemper we are now considering? Physicians and surgeons who have studied the texture of the eye, and made the cure of its maladies their chief employ, may give us indeed something that will strengthen the optic nerves when weakened or relaxed; or by some outward operation, may remove such obstructions as would otherwise impede the sight: “But (a) since the world began, (as the poor man here excellently argues) was it ever heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind?” and (as he might have added) by a medicine so incongruous as a plaster of clay? because the uncommonness of the application is so far from diminishing, that it rather raises the credit and reputation of the miracle: at least, it must be allowed to be as great and triumphant a display of a supernatural power to work a cure by means that have no fitness to that end, as it is to do it without any means at all. In the former case, the person who undertakes the cure, has only the distemper to contend with; but here, he has a double difficulty to conquer, and must not only control the power of the disease, but change the repugnant qualities of bodies, and make them productive of quite contrary effects. (b) The fathers here say, that Christ, to illustrate his miraculous power, used that to anoint the blind man’s eyes with, which was the greatest impediment to seeing, and most pernicious to the eyes. But though all must allow, that the method which he here made use of was of no significance as to the cure of the man’s blindness, yet was it, nevertheless, highly pertinent, in order to convince the spectators, as well as the patient himself, of his sovereign virtue, which could produce such a wonderful effect by no other application but what was indifferent, if not obstructive to the cure.

Some of the ancient fathers were so rigid in their censures against adultery, that they would not admit any persons convicted thereof into the communion of the church, even after the longest penance; and carried their zeal and resentment to such an height, as to think it no great harm to kill them. No wonder then, if men of such severe opinions were unwilling to receive into the canon of Scripture the history of the woman taken in this crime, because, as they imagined, it gave permission to lewdness, since our Saviour sent her away without condemning her; whereas, (c) in his present circumstances, he had no commission to pass sentence upon her, though in bidding her (d) go, and, for fear of the Divine judgment, repent and sin no more, he sufficiently declared himself against all such practices.

* Upon a different persuasion, however, it was that this passage came at first to be marked as dubious, and, in time, was quite thrown out as spurious in many ancient, especially Greek copies: But, in opposition to this, we need only observe, (e) that this part of history was found in the sixteen manuscripts which Stephanus, in all the seventeen (save one) which Beza, and in that infinite number which our learned Mills has made use of; that Tatian, who lived in the year 160, i. e. sixty years after the death of St John, and Ammianus of Alexandria, who flourished about the year 220, and made their several Harmonies of the Gospel out of the copies then in use, do both (as appears from the canons of Eusebius) relate it; that most of the copies of the East (according to Selden’s report) retain it; and though “it be not found in some manu-

(a) John ix. 32.

(b) *Whitby’s* Annotations on John ix. 6.

(c) *Whitby’s* Annotations on John viii.

(d) John viii. 11.

* The words of St Austin upon this occasion are these,—“Ut nonnulli modicæ fidei, vel potius inimici vera fidei, credo metuentes peccandi impunitatem

dari mulieribus suis, illud, quod de adulteræ indulgentiâ Dominus fecit, auferrent de codicibus suis; quasi permissionem peccandi tribuerit, qui dixit, *jam deinceps noli peccare.*” *De Conjug. Adult. lib. ii. c. 7.*

(e) *Calmet’s* Commentary, and *Whitby’s* Annotations.

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scripts, (as the Greek code, cited by Cotelarius, expresses the matter) yet it is entire in the ancient manuscripts, and all the apostles make mention of it in the Constitutions which they set forth for the edification of the church. †."

This is enough to vindicate the truth and sincerity of this part of St John's history from the censures of critics who suspect it; and, to rescue his doctrine from such false constructions as the adversaries of our Lord's Divinity would put upon it, we need only be mindful to distinguish between his Divine and human nature, and not to apply such words and actions of his as relate to the one to the prejudice of the other. Those who deny the Deity of Christ, do nevertheless acknowledge that he was a prophet sent from God, and invested with an high commission. Now, under this character he could only appear and act, in virtue of his human nature, and must thereupon be deemed subservient to the orders and commands of his heavenly Father: And therefore, as the very office of a prophet requires, that he should speak nothing of himself, not deliver his own mind or doctrine, nor seek his own glory, but speak all things in the name, and do all things for the glory of him that sent him; so are we not to wonder that we find our Blessed Lord, though he had in him "all the fulness of the Godhead," yet in his prophetic capacity, speaking and acting as if he had no power but what was given him from above, (even as ambassadors here on earth are obliged to pursue their master's instructions), and therefore professing so frequently that he delivered no doctrine of his own invention, nor did any thing but what he had a commission to do.

The Socinians indeed allow, that the commission wherewith our Saviour was sent into the world, to do and reveal God's will, was reason enough to entitle him to the appellation of the Son of God, and that this is all that he pretends to when he seems to clear himself to the Jews from any higher assumption. But now (a) it appears, from a due inspection of the context, that Christ did not intend to say or prove that he was the Son of God, as being only his ambassador, extraordinarily instructed, and so sent into the world; but on a far more excellent account, viz. that before he came into the world he was with God the Father, and so was his true and essential Son, as being God of God, and partaking of the same nature as a son does with his father. From the 25th to the 30th verse inclusively, it is manifest that our Lord discoursed to the Jews in such a manner, that they still thought he was asserting his Godhead, and therefore (b) "we stone thee, (say they) because thou, being a man, makest thyself God," viz. by calling God so emphatically, and with such peculiarity his Father, as that he was so to him alone, and so that (c) "he and his Father were one." But to this our Saviour does not answer by denying, either that he was God, or that he had ever challenged to himself that dignity, which (had he been only man) had been the most proper thing he could have said to take off the objection of his blasphemy; but, instead of that, he seems rather to argue that he was so the Son of God as to have the Divine Nature in him: "For if judges and magistrates, says he, are called gods, from an imperfect resemblance and participation of the Divine authority, how much more may I

† [The *Constitutions*, though a work of very high antiquity, were certainly not set forth by all the apostles, nor written by Clement the fellow-labourer of St Paul. *Griesbach*, after a collation of manuscripts more accurate perhaps than any that was made before him, is of opinion, that the story of the woman taken in adultery made no part of the Gospel written by St John. He does not, however, absolutely reject it as spurious, but only says—*probabilitur delenda est*. Many others have adopted this opinion upon his authority; but the question is by no means

decided, and of those who think that the story was not recorded in the Gospel by St John, some are of opinion that it is true and worthy of credit. It is not indeed a story likely to have been fabricated either by Jews or Christians; for it does not redound to the honour of the Jews, and I am aware of no controversy that was ever agitated among Christians, in which such a story could have served the cause of any party.]

(a) Bishop *Bull*, de *Judicio Eccl. Cath.*

(b) John x. 33.

(c) *Ibid.* ver. 30.

be called God, who am both by nature the Son of God, and in the most excellent manner authorised by him?" For this he signifies by saying, that (a) "his Father had sanctified him and sent him into the world;" wherein he still declares that God was his Father, and that he was first sanctified, and then sent, which plainly implies that he was the Son of God in heaven before his mission into the world; and therefore, as an additional proof of his Divine original, he appeals to the Divine operations he performed: (b) "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, though you believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me and I in him."

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth xvii. 14.
Mark i. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

When therefore our Blessed Saviour says of himself, that (c) "All power was given unto him both in heaven and earth;" and that unto his disciples (d) "he had appointed a kingdom, even as his Father had appointed unto him;" when St Paul styles him the (e) "Righteous Judge, who shall give a crown of righteousness to all that love his appearance;" and St Matthew, (f) "that King who shall separate the sheep from the goats," and (g) "reward every one according to his works;" it can hardly be thought, that to distribute rewards in the kingdom of glory is a prerogative peculiar to the Father alone, and such as no way belongs to the Son; because our Saviour, in his reply to Zebedee's children, tells us, (h) "that to sit on his right hand and on his left, was not his to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it was prepared of his Father:" since the whole and only design of the passage is to shew, that those rewards shall not be distributed, upon such conditions, and in such a manner as these petitioners vainly imagined. (i) To this purpose we may observe, that the words "shall be given to them," are only a supplement made by the translators, for they are not in the original, which is literally thus,—“To sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but, or except to them alone, for whom it is prepared of my Father;” And this means no more than that the honours and degrees of happiness in the other world are not the Son's to give, in the sense that these apostles fancied, i. e. he does not give them absolutely and arbitrarily; he is not led by partiality and fondness, and respect of persons; he is not carried by humour, or vanquished by the importunity of friends and suitors, as earthly princes are, but is limited by the considerations of equity and strict justice, from which it can never be consistent with the perfections of his nature to depart: For that the whole process of the final judgment, and consequently the dispensation of future rewards and punishments, is to be transacted by our Blessed Saviour, we have this express testimony in Scripture, (k) "The Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father."

Though we are not much acquainted with the condition of angels, or the ingredients of their happiness, yet thus much the Scripture has informed us concerning them, that (l) "they are ministering spirits, sent out to minister for them that shall be heirs of salvation; and therefore we may reasonably presume, that they are full of tenderness for their charge, solicitous for their particular safety, and extremely glad of any good that befalls them. (m) How these heavenly hosts were affected with the salvation of mankind in general, is evident from the hymn with which they attended at the birth of Christ, to welcome him into the world; and though their nature be far distant from us mortals, and their bliss exquisite beyond what we are able to conceive; yet, in regard that both their nature and their bliss are finite, their joy may certainly admit of

(a) John x. 36.

(b) Ibid. ver. 37, 38.

(c) Matth. xxviii. 18.

(d) Luke xxii. 29.

(e) 2 Tim. iv. 8.

(f) Matth. xxv. 31, &c.

(g) Ibid. xvi. 27.

(h) Ibid. xx. 23.

(i) Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. i.

(k) John v. 22, 23.

(l) Heb. i. 14.

(m) Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii.

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an increase; and as often as a sinner is converted from the evil of his ways, there may spring up a fresh object, and a large and literal addition to it.

But can this properly be said of God too, whose perfection of happiness allows no such accumulation? No, doubtless; and therefore with respect to him, we must interpret this, as reason and religion oblige us to understand many such like passages where human parts and passions are attributed to him. As therefore the Holy Ghost, meaning to represent his displeasure and our baseness, does it, by saying, that we provoke him to anger, kindle his fury, grieve and weary his spirit, and the like; so here, by saying, that God rejoiceth over a repenting sinner, is intended, that such repentance is highly agreeable to him, and that were his nature capable of the same unequal motions with ours, the joy of a father or a friend, for retrieving the person he loves best, and had been most in pain for, would be but a feeble and a very faint image of that satisfaction which this excites in him, who loves us better than the tenderest parent, or most affectionate friend upon earth does, or can do.

But why should the degree of joy be so intense upon this occasion? Why should the reformation of one sinner raise it above the safety of many souls who never fell from their integrity? And the ninety-nine sheep which never strayed, excite less of it than one poor silly wanderer? In order to resolve this difficulty, we must observe, (a) that, in the parables of the Gospel, it is usual to represent all of the same kind, though they be sometimes the greater number, by one man. Thus, in the parable of the marriage-supper, the man who had not on his wedding-garment (according to the sense of most interpreters), represents all wicked men; and in that of the several talents, the slothful servant, who hid his in a napkin, is said to be one, whereas they who improved theirs are three; and yet it can hardly be doubted, but that there are fewer who receive the grace of God to any good purpose, than they who receive it in vain; and in like manner, though, in the preceding parables, there is mention made but of one lost piece of silver, and of one strayed sheep, yet is that one the representative of the whole tribe of sinners, which do certainly out-number the few that are righteous; and therefore, according to this acceptation, the joy in heaven may be allowed to be greater, because the objects that give occasion to it are more.

But even if this were not, as these words were spoken of God after the manner of men, so they are to be understood in a sense agreeable to human passions. Now in ourselves we perceive, that, in obtaining what we passionately desired, in regaining what we looked upon as lost, and in securing what was in great and imminent danger, our joy is strong, and our delight transporting. The surprise of an escape, which we did not expect, and the regaining of a treasure we had given over as gone, is entertained with rapture, because it is a kind of new accession to our fortunes, and like a thing we never enjoyed before. A loving father, no doubt, finds great comfort in seeing all his children in a perfect state of health; but if one of them chance to fall sick beyond expectation of recovery, to see him out of danger, administers more present joy than does the constant health of all the rest; and, in like manner, though a continued course of goodness be in itself most valuable, yet the recovery of a lost sinner, the reviving one dead in trespasses and sins, the seeing him snatched as a fire-brand out of the fire, when he was just going to fall into it, gives a more fresh and lively joy; and therefore (b) it is meet, says the father in the parable, that upon this occasion "we should make merry and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found."

Some interpreters are of opinion, that the parable of the Lord of the vineyard, paying all his labourers alike, is to be understood of the gift of grace, or first admission to the privileges of the Gospel, and not of the fruition of glory; because the wages here mentioned are given to the envious and unthankful. But allowing this to be no

(a) *Whitby's Annotations on Luke xv. 7.*

(b) *Luke xv, 23, 24.*

more than a passage inserted for ornament and illustration only, or that it may mean a reward so surprisingly great, as, among men, would provoke the envy of others; yet if we state the case of the several labourers in the parable, as it includes the Jews and Gentiles in general, and private Christians in particular, we shall find no injustice in what the Lord of the vineyard did unto them.

(a) To the Jews God was pleased to make the first express discoveries of his will by a written law: In process of time the like benefit was extended to the Gentiles. They readily accepted it, and, by so doing, became partakers of the same grace and precious promises with those who had long been brought up under the legal, and, from that, removed sooner under the evangelical dispensation. The apostles left all and followed Christ. The primitive Christians gave in their names to his doctrine, and continued stedfast in it, at the certain peril of their liberties, their fortunes, their lives; and yet, in any after ages of Christianity, they, who live and die (though quietly and peaceably) in the sincere profession of this religion, are promised the kingdom of heaven as a reward for their faith and obedience.

In like manner, some have the happiness of a pious education, and carry on their early virtue through the several stages of life; others, who either wanted that advantage, or have neglected to improve it, run into the same excess of riot with the unthinking part of the world; and yet if these, though late, see their follies, and effectually forsake them, the promise of God standeth sure, (b) "that at what time soever the wicked man turneth away from the wickedness he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive." This is the whole sense of the parable, and these are the common cases to which it is applied: But we mistake the meaning of it widely, if we think that it denotes an equality of rewards in the kingdom of heaven, since we have this assurance given us, that as there (c) "is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, so also is the resurrection of the dead." Those that are raised to everlasting life shall indeed be all glorious; but still the glory of some shall be greater than that of others. Every good Christian shall, no doubt, be admitted to a state of felicity; but when we consider these words of our Saviour, (d) "I have appointed unto you a kingdom, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel," we cannot but infer, that there are some particular marks and instances of glory, wherewith the apostles of our Lord will be honoured above other Christians. And, in like manner, though a late penitent (if he be sincere) shall be received to mercy at last, yet he has not ordinarily any reason to expect a degree of glory equal to his who has never swerved from his duty, or has quickly returned to it. His bliss shall be perfect indeed, though it be not the most exalted; and though he be less happy than some other Christians, yet he shall be much happier than he deserves.

Though the difference between the Jews and Samaritans, in matters of religion, was great, and no small obstruction to all civil intercourse, yet it was not at all times carried to such an height as to deny to each other the common rights of hospitality. Our Saviour himself was, once upon a time, (e) when he met the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, kindly received by the people of Sychar, for the space of two days, but then he was returning out of Judea, whereas he was now going up to Jerusalem with a purpose to celebrate the feast of tabernacles. The Samaritans had likewise a feast of the same kind, though not observed at the same time, (f) of as old a date as the first separation under Jeroboam, and instituted both in imitation of, and in opposition to, the great festival that our Lord was now going to solemnize; and therefore, (g) this travelling

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xviii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

(a) Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. ii.
(d) Luke xxii. 29, 30.
on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

(e) John iv.

(b) Ezek. xviii. 26.

(f) 1 Kings xii. 32, 33

(c) 1 Cor. xv. 41, 42.

(g) Stanhope

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&c. or 5411.
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through their country, with a set purpose to do this, was looked upon as an affront to their way of worship: For it argued our Lord's judgment in this case to be, that Jerusalem was the only place where these feasts could be regularly celebrated, and, consequently, that the keeping them on Mount Gerizzim, and the temple there, was a presumptuous innovation, directly contrary to the will and law of God.

"But why was our Saviour alone treated in this rude manner, when every traveller to Jerusalem, upon the like occasion, declared against the Samaritan schism as much as he did, and yet, for any thing we find, met with better entertainment?" Now this different sort of treatment can be resolved into nothing but the different character of the travellers. The Samaritans might think, that the opinions and practices of common people were not worth their regard, but that it would be of mighty consequence if a person so eminent as Jesus should declare against them; and therefore, since his going to worship at Jerusalem, on this solemn occasion, would, in all common acceptance, bear this meaning, they contrived to prevent, as much as in them lay, the influence which that supposed indignity might have, by revenging it with another of not receiving him; because such refusal, they thought, was a constructive disowning of his authority, and a plain declaration to all people, that whatever esteem and veneration others might have for this famed man, they themselves took him for no prophet.

(a) In this feast of tabernacles, it was a custom among the Jews (derived, as some imagine, from the institution of their prophets Haggai and Zechariah), on the last day more especially, to fetch water from the fountain of Siloam in great pomp and solemnity, with trumpets and other musical instruments going before them. At such fountains, it was usual to build receptacles or wells, and in the middle of them to have pipes and cisterns laid, through which the water passed; and, coming out at cocks, was received in urns, or large big-bellied vessels, and so carried to the temple. The water thus carried was given to the priests, who, mixing it with the wine of the sacrifices, offered it to God by way of intercession for the blessing of rain against the approaching seed-time: And, during the whole festivity, they read the lvth chapter of the prophet Isaiah, which begins with these words, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money," &c.

Now, whoever looks into the method of our Saviour's preaching, may easily perceive, that it was customary with him to take occasion, from some obvious thing or other, to discourse of spiritual blessings, and frequently to make use of phrases metaphorically taken from the matter in hand. Pursuant hereunto we find him, in allusion to the customs of this feast, beginning his invitation with words not unlike what we have cited from the prophet, *b*) "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." Water is, by God himself, represented as no bad emblem of the dispensation of grace; for (c) "I will pour water, says he, upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." Which he explains in this manner,—"I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring;" and (d) the frequent libations, in the feast of tabernacles, were supposed, by the Jewish doctors themselves, to have had a mystic sense in them: And therefore the meaning of our Saviour's words is this,—"That whoever was desirous of the spiritual blessings which were prefigured in this festival rite, if he would become his disciple, and believe in him as the promised Messiah, he would communicate to him such gifts of the Holy Ghost, and in such a plentiful measure, as the world was not yet acquainted with; "for (e) out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

Whence it is that our Saviour borrowed this metaphorical expression, is a matter not so well agreed by the learned. Some think from the Proverbs of Solomon, (f) "The

(a) *Whitby's, Hammond's, and Beausobre's* Annotations.

xliv. 3.

(f) Prov. xviii. 4.

(b) John vii. 37.

(d) *Surenhusii* Concil. ex V. T. apud Johannem,

(c) Isaiah

(e) John vii. 38.

words of a man's mouth are as deep waters, and the well-spring of wisdom a flowing brook." Others from the thirty-second of Isaiah, (a) "Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment, and a man shall be as rivers of waters in a dry place:" And others, with more probability, from the fifty-eighth of that prophet, (b) "Thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not." However this be, it is certain, (c) that our Saviour, taking the rise of his discourse from the customary libations at this time, had under his view and consideration the make and figure of the water-vessels that were used on this occasion, which, by reason of their large bellies, being able to hold a great quantity of water, were therefore proper emblems of that plentiful effusion of the Holy Ghost, which he intended to send upon the Christian church, when (d) "to one should be given, by the Spirit, the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit; to another, faith, by the same Spirit; to another, the gifts of healing, by the same Spirit; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, divers kinds of tongues; and to another, the interpretation of them."

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

[This is the account which is usually given of our Lord's exclamation to the people on the last day of the feast of tabernacles; and it is surely a sufficient answer to the preceding objection. The whole transactions of that day may be placed however in a light somewhat different, in which the words of Jesus will appear to have a meaning more obvious, and at the same time equally important.

"The feast of tabernacles, says Bishop Horsley (e), continued eight days. At what precise time I know not, but in some part of the interval between the prophets and the birth of Christ, the priests had taken up a practice of marching daily, during the feast, round the altar of burnt-offerings, waving in their hands branches of the palm, and singing, as they went,—“Save, we pray, and prosper us!” This was done but once on each of the first seven days; but on the eighth and last, it was repeated seven times. When this ceremony was finished, the people, with extravagant demonstrations of joy and exultation, fetched buckets of water from the fountain of Siloam, and presented them to the priests in the temple; who mixed the water with the wine of the sacrifices, and poured it upon the altar, chanting all the while that text of Isaiah (f)—“With joy we shall draw water from the fountain (or wells) of salvation.” The fountain of salvation, in the language of a prophet, is the Messiah; the water to be drawn from that fountain is the water of his Spirit. Of this mystical meaning of the water, the inventors of those superstitious rites, whoever they might be, seem to have had some obscure discernment; although they understood the fountain literally of the fountain of Siloam: for, to encourage the people to the practice of this laborious superstition, they had persuaded them that this rite was of singular efficacy to draw down the prophetic spirit. The multitudes, zealously busied in this unmeaning ceremony, were they to whom Jesus addressed that emphatical exclamation—“If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.” The first words—“if any man *thirst*”—are ironical. “Are ye famished,” says he, “with thirst, that ye fatigue yourselves with fetching all this water up the hill? O! but ye thirst for the pure waters of Siloam, the sacred brook that rises in the mountain of God, and is devoted to the purification of the temple! Are ye indeed athirst for these? Come, then, unto me and drink. I am the *fountain*, of which *that* which purifies the temple is the *type*: I am the fountain of *salvation* of which your prophet spake; *from me* the true believer shall receive the living water,—not in scanty draughts fetched with toil from this penurious rill, but in a well perpetually springing up within him.” The words of Isaiah, which the priests were chanting, and to which Jesus alludes, are part of a song of praise and triumph, which the faithful are supposed

(a) Ver. 1, 2.

(b) Verse 11.

(c) Surenhus. *ibid.*

(d) 1 Cor. xii. 8, &c.

(e) Sermons, vol. iii. ed. i. p. 38.

(f) Ch. xii. ver. 3.

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to use in that prosperous state of the church, which, according to the prophet, it shall finally attain under Jesse's root.—“In that day shalt thou say, Behold, God is my salvation: I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and song, he also is become my salvation.” Consider these words as they lie in the context of the prophet; consider the occasion upon which Jesus, standing in the temple, applies them to himself; consider the sense in which he applies them; and judge whether this application was less than an open claim to be the Lord Jehovah come unto his temple. It is remarkable that it had, at the time, an immediate and wonderful effect. “Many of the people, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth *this is the prophet*.” The light burst at once upon their minds. Jesus no sooner made the application of this abused prophecy to himself, than they acknowledged the justness of it, and acknowledged in him the fountain of salvation.”]

DISSERTATION III.

OF OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR'S MIRACLES, AND THEIR EXCELLENCY.

THAT the accomplishment of ancient prophecies, in the person and actions of our Blessed Saviour, was one of the external evidences of his Divine mission, and consequently of the truth of our most holy religion, was the subject of our last Dissertation; and how far the evidence of the miracles which he wrought is available to the same great end, we shall now endeavour to set before our reader.

(a) To this purpose we must observe, that a true miracle is properly such an operation as exceeds the ordinary course of things, and is repugnant to the known laws of nature, either as to its subject, matter, or the manner of its performance. For though we readily acknowledge that there are beings in the spiritual world which are able to perform things far exceeding the power of men, and therefore apt to beget wonder and amazement in us; yet that any created beings, and, consequently, agents of a limited power, are capable of working such miracles as our Saviour did; are capable of controlling the course of nature, of supplying mens natural defects, of giving sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, and life to the dead (which are miracles relating to the subject matter), or of doing any of these things in an instant, by a touch, by a word, at a distance, and without any kind of outward means (which are miracles regarding the manner of their performance), is a thing impossible; unless we can suppose that limited, inferior, and created beings, have an equal power of creating, controlling, and restoring with Almighty God, which is contradiction enough in all conscience.

It was upon this persuasion, therefore, viz. that “true miracles are the sole operation of God,” that the world has, all along, agreed to acknowledge and accept of miracles as an authentic and indisputable testimony, that the persons entrusted with such power were certainly sent and commissioned by God. To this purpose we find Pharaoh's magicians confessing, (b) that the miracles which Moses and Aaron exhibited were the finger of God; and in the controversy between Elijah and the priests of Baal, it was readily accepted as a fair proposal, that he (c) “who answered by fire from heaven” should be unanimously served and worshipped as God. The less reason have

(a) Bishop Smalbroke's Vindication.

(b) Exod. viii. 19.

(c) 1 Kings xviii. 24, &c.

we then to wonder, that we hear a learned ruler of the Jews accosting our Lord in these words, (a) " Rabbi. we know that thou art a teacher sent from God; for no man can do those miracles that thou dost, except God be with him;" or that a mean man, who had been born blind, should confront the whole assembly of the Pharisees with this one argument, (b) " Since the world began, was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of the blind; if this man were not of God, he could do nothing;" or that our blessed Saviour himself should so frequently appeal to the miracles he wrought as proper testimonies of his Divine mission, (c) " The works which my Father hath sent me to finish; the works which I do in my Father's name, the same bear witness of me, that my Father sent me."

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

Our Saviour, indeed, and his apostles both, do often appeal to the predictions of the prophets relating to the promised Messiah, as fulfilled and accomplished in him; and the truth is, unless the validity of this appeal can be supported, miracles alone, or exclusive of this testimony, would not be a sufficient evidence of our Lord's commission: But then it ought to be considered, that, when among the particular predictions of a person promised to the Jews as their Messiah, it was foretold that he should (d) " be like unto Moses;" that (e) " the Spirit of the Lord should rest upon him;" that (f) " he should open the eyes of the blind, and unstop the ears of the deaf; and that he should make the lame to leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing." Miracles became then an essential ingredient of his character, and a sure test of his being a prophet sent from God.

(g) Some modern Jews indeed, when pressed with the evidence of our Saviour's miracles, make this their subterfuge,—That the Messiah, at his coming, was not to perform any wonders of this kind, but only to manage the Lord's battles, and to overcome the people that were round about him. But that this was not of old the sense of the Jewish nation, is evident from the words of the people in our Saviour's time, (h) " When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" Nay, (i) an author of theirs of no great antiquity, (after his having mentioned the three glorious gifts, viz. prophecy, miracles, and the knowledge of God, which the Israelites, in the time of their captivity, had lost) gives us to understand, that upon the appearance of the Messiah, the return of miracles was justly to be expected, in completion of this prophecy,—(k) " I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions."

Since the Messiah then was to work miracles when he came into the world, if we consider the design of our blessed Saviour's mission, viz. (l) that he was a teacher sent from God to abolish a form of worship which had incontestably been established by the power of miracles in Moses, and to introduce a new religion repugnant to the wisdom of the world in many mysterious doctrines, and abhorrent to the vicious inclinations of men in all its righteous laws and precepts; that he was appointed, in short, to destroy the kingdom of the devil, and, upon its ruins, to erect a kingdom of righteousness, there was an absolute necessity for him to be invested with a power of working miracles: Otherwise his pretensions to this high character had been ridiculous, and the Jews, with good reason, might have demanded of him, (m) " Master, we would see a sign from thee; what sign therefore dost thou do, that we may see and believe?" But this demand is effectually silenced by our Saviour's being able to make the reply,—(n) " If I had not done among you the works which none other man did, ye had not had sin; but now ye have both seen and hated both me and my Father."

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| (a) John iii. 2. | (b) Ibid. ix. 32, 33. | (c) Ibid. v. 36. | (d) Deut. xviii. 15. |
| (e) Isaiah xi. 2. | (f) Ibid. xxxv. 5, 6. | (g) Maimonides, H. Melach. et Milch, cap. xi. | |
| (h) John vii. 31. | (i) Abravenel in Joel. | (k) Joel ii. 28. and Acts ii. 17. | (l) Stilling- |
| fleet's Orig. Sacra, p. 172. | (m) John vi. 30. | (n) Ibid. xv. 24. | |

A. M. 4035.
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31. &c.
Vn. g. Ær. 30.

John the Baptist, who was born a little before our Saviour, was his fore-runner. (a) He appeared at the time when the Messiah was expected; and being much famed for his virtue and sanctity of life, was followed by the people, who were prone to take him for the prophet who was to come, as there was not indeed, at that time, a greater person born among women: And yet the Divine Providence so ordered the matter, that, as great as he was, he wanted this character of the true Messiah, viz. the working of miracles; and therefore our Saviour, comparing himself with the Baptist, a burning and a shining light indeed, but who himself did no miracles, (b) "I have a greater witness, says he, than that of John; for the works which my Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that I am the Messiah, or (which is all one) that my Father hath sent me."

And well indeed might our Lord be allowed to claim a pre-eminence, not above the Baptist only, but above every prophet that went before him; when upon so many occasions he exercised a power and authority not inferior to that of God; when, by the same Omnipotence wherewith he created all things at first, he multiplied a few loaves and two fishes into a sufficiency to feed five thousand; when, at his command, the wind and the sea grew still, and unclean spirits departed from mens bodies, confessing him to be the Son of God; when acute diseases, and chronical griefs, (c) such as no length of time, no skill, no remedies, no expence could assuage, were equally cured with a touch, nay with the touch of his garment, with a word, nay, with a word that operated effectually upon the absent and at a distance; when persons at death's door, nay, actually dead, and dead for some time, were commanded back to life and health; and himself, when slain by the Jews and committed to the grave, was (according to his own prediction) raised from the dead, by the same Divine Spirit whereby "he quickeneth and enliveneth all things."

These and many more actions of the like nature, recorded in the Gospel, are plain demonstrations of a Divine Power residing in our Blessed Saviour: But then there is something farther to be said concerning these miraculous acts of his, viz. that they were exceedingly well chosen to characterise the Messiah, in regard of their suitableness to the end and design of his coming.

(d) The law was enacted with a very terrible pomp, such as spoke it to be (what indeed it was) a dispensation of servitude and great severity. But the Gospel is a covenant of reconciliation and peace, of friendship, nay, of sonship with God, intended not so much to strike awe upon mens minds, as to charm and win them over by all the endearing methods of gentleness and love; and therefore, the wonders that bore testimony to its truth were works of mercy and kindness, such as never wrought any harm, but always brought comfort and advantage to the needy and distressed; (e) sustenance to the hungry, supplies to those in want, safety to them that were ready to perish, speech to the dumb, hearing to the deaf, eyes to the blind, understanding to the disturbed, strength to the impotent, limbs to the maimed, health to the sick, life to the dead, and release to souls and bodies held in bondage by the devil. These, these are the wonders by which our Jesus proved his mission, wonders of gentleness and pity, of beneficence and love, wherein he manifestly excels, and, as it were, triumphs over all the prophets that went before him. They proved their commission by acts of Divine vengeance and sore plagues, as well as by cures and corporal deliverances; whereas our Blessed Lord (f) "went about always doing good;" healing diseases and infirmities, but inflicting none; and releasing from death, but never hastening it; insomuch, that through the whole course of his ministry we have not one instance of his power exerted in the suffering or annoyance even of his bitterest enemies.

(a) *Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah*, part i. p. 45.

(c) *Stanhope's Sermons at Boyle's Lectures*.

(e) *Stanhope's Sermons at Boyle's Lectures*.

(b) John. v. 35, 36,

(d) *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. i.

(f) Acts x. 38.

When John the Baptist had heard of the works which (a) "Christ did, he sent two of his disciples with this message to him, Art thou he that should come, (i. e. the promised Messiah) or look we for another?" To whom our Lord returned this answer, "Go and shew John again these things which ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up." The answer is in a great measure taken from the prophet Isaiah (b), describing the great operations of the Messiah; and by remitting the Baptist to them, our Saviour intended to shew, that he must of necessity be the person he sent to enquire after, because he had not only the power of doing miracles, but even of doing the self-same miracles that the evangelical prophet had predicted of the Messiah.

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

(c) Now, of all the great attributes of God, there is none that shine brighter and more amiable in our eyes than truth and goodness: The former cannot attest a lie, nor the latter seduce men into dangerous and destructive mistakes. And yet if God should communicate any part of his power to an impostor to enable him to work miracles, and such miracles, in kind, as were foretold of the true Messiah, in confirmation of his pretences, what would become of these two sacred attributes? To suspect, I say, that Almighty God is capable of employing his infinite power, with a design to mislead and delude mankind, in what relates to their eternal concerns, is to destroy and subvert his very nature, and to leave ourselves no notion at all of such a being. Nay, for him to permit the same evidences to be produced for errors as for truth, is in effect to cancel his own credentials, and to make miracles of no significance at all. And therefore how artfully soever some impostors may contrive their delusions, yet we are not to doubt but that, if we examine, 1st, The works themselves, and their manner of being done, and, 2dly, The persons themselves, and the ends for which they do them, we shall be able to discern the difference between real miracles and lying wonders.

(d) 1st, Then, in relation to the works themselves, it is required that they be possible, since no power whatever can effect that which is strictly impossible; that they be probable, since the Divine power will hardly concern itself in what savours of fable and romance; that they be not below the majesty of God, as he is the ruler and governor of the world; nor inconsistent with his character, as he is a good and gracious being; that they be done openly before a sufficient number of witnesses; readily without any previous forms or ceremonies, which may make them look like incantation; and upon all proper and important occasions to denote the permanency of that Divine power by which they are effected.

2dly, In relation to the person pretending to a Divine mission, it is required that he be a man of good report for his unblamable conversation; that he be in the perfect exercise of his reason and senses, and constant and uniform in the message he delivers; that the doctrine which he endeavours to establish by his miracles be consistent with the principles of true reason and natural religion, consistent with right notions and worship of God, and consistent with the former Revelations he hath made of his will; of a tendency to destroy the devil's power in the world, to recover men from their ignorance, to reform them from their vices, to lead them into the practice of virtue and true godliness, by proper motives and arguments, and, in short, to advance the general welfare of societies, as well as every man's particular happiness in this life, and in his preparation for a better. And now to observe a little how all these characters meet in the blessed Jesus.

That Jesus of Nazareth was a person of great virtue and goodness, in full possession of his reason and senses, and constant and uniform in the message he delivered to mankind, not only the whole tenor of his conduct, as it is recorded by the evangelists, but

(a) Matth. xi. 2, &c.
(d) Chandler on Miracles.

(b) Chap. xxxv. 5.

(c) Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. ii.

A. M. 4035,
&c. or 5441.
Ann. Dom.
31, &c.
Vulg. Ær. 30.

the nature of his doctrine, and excellency of his precepts, the manner of his discourses to the people, and the wisdom of his replies to the insidious questions of his adversaries, are a plain demonstration: And that (a) "this Jesus was a man approved of God by miracles, wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of all the people," is manifest, not only from the testimony of his friends and disciples, but (b) from the concession of heathen historians, as well as the traditions of the Jewish Talmud, wherein the memory of them is preserved.

These miracles indeed were above the skill of men or angels to effect; but they were not therefore impossible, because subject to the power of Almighty God; for the same agent who formed the eye, could restore the blind to sight; he, who wrought the whole frame of our bodies, could as easily cure the maimed, or heal the diseased; and he, who causes the rain to descend, and to water the earth, that it may minister bread to the eater, and seed to the sower, could be at no loss to change water into wine, or to multiply the loaves and fishes for the relief of the hungry.

These miracles, again, being acts of mercy as well as power, were not consistent with the character of an impostor, or the agency of any wicked spirit; but that God should have compassion on his creatures, and exercise his tender mercies over the works of his own hands; that he should give bread to the hungry, limbs to the maimed, and release to such as were under the captivity of Satan, is no improbable thing at all. These were actions suitable to his majesty, and highly comporting with his wisdom and goodness, since they naturally tended both to beget reverence in the minds of men towards his messenger, and to reconcile them to the belief and obedience of his heavenly will.

Now these miracles our Saviour did openly, in the temple, in the synagogues, and on the festivals, when the concourse of people was greatest, and when the doctors of the law, who came on purpose to ensnare him, were sitting by, and beholding what was done. These he did readily, and with a word's speaking: For (c) Peace be still, quelled the raging of the winds and waves; (d) Young man arise, revived the widow's son; (e) Ephphatha be opened, gave the deaf man hearing; and (f) Lazarus come forth, raised him from the grave who had been four days dead. This he did frequently, and upon all proper occasions; for, from the time that he entered upon his ministry, scarce a day passed without some fresh instance of his power and goodness, insomuch, that if all his actions of this kind had been particularly recorded, (g) "the world itself (as St John by an elegant hyperbole declares) would not contain the books which should be written: And (what crowns all) these he did with a design to establish a religion, whose business it is to give men the most exalted thoughts of God and his Providence, and the greatest certainty of future rewards and punishments; to oblige them, by the strongest motives, to observe and practise whatsoever things are true, and honest, and just, and pure, and lovely, and of good report; to persuade them to mortify every inordinate affection, and to attain those excellent dispositions of mind, which will make them resemble God, and best prepare them for future happiness; in a word, to establish the practice of the two great virtues, the love of God, and the love of our neighbour, upon these two excellent principles, of faith in God, as the rewarder of those that seek him, and faith in Jesus Christ, as the Saviour and Judge of mankind.

And if such be the end and design of the Christian religion, there is little reason to suppose (as the Jews are very willing to object) that the devil could have any hand in assisting our Saviour to effect such miracles as gave credit to the first appearance, and strength and success to the propagation of those doctrines, which were calculated on purpose to destroy his dominion in the world, and upon its ruins to erect the kingdom

(a) Acts ii. 22.

(b) See Bishop *Chandler's* Defence, where he proves this, as well as the traditions of the Talmud, by several instances, p. 429.

(c) Mark vii. 34, 35.

(f) John xi. 43, 44.

(c) Mark iv. 39.

(d) Luke vii. 14.

(g) Ibid. 21. 25.

of God and his Christ. The devil is not so silly a being as to join forces with his avowed enemy, in order to ruin and depose himself: And if our Saviour could hope for no assistance from that quarter, the pretence of his doing his miracles, † by virtue of the name Jehovah, stolen out of the sanctuary, and used as a charm, is a fiction too gross and palpable to stand in need of any confutation.

Philostratus indeed, in his history of the life of Apollonius †², sets him up for a great

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

† The account which some later Jews give us of this transaction is thus related,—That in the time of Helena the queen, Jesus of Nazareth came into Jerusalem, and in the temple found a stone (on which the ark of God was wont to rest), whereon was written the *Tetragrammaton*, or *more peculiar name of God*; that whosoever should get the name into his possession, and be skilled in it, would be able to do what he pleased; that therefore their wise men, fearing lest any of the Israelites should get that name, and destroy the world, made two dogs of brass, and placed them at the door of the sanctuary; that whenever any had gone in, and learned that name, these dogs were wont, at their coming out, to bark so terribly, that they forgot the name and the letters they had newly learned. But when Jesus of Nazareth, say they, went in, he not only learned the letters of this name, but wrote them in a parchment, and hid it, as he came out, in an incision which he had made in his flesh; and though through the barking of the dogs he had forgot the name, yet he learned it afterwards from his parchment: And it was by virtue of this, say they, that Jesus restored the lame, healed the leprous, raised the dead, walked upon the sea, and did all his other miraculous works. *Pug. Fidei*, part ii. cap. viii. sect. 6. as quoted in *Kidder's Demonstration*, part i. p. 40.

† This Apollonius is, by the enemies of Christianity, set up as a rival to our blessed Saviour, in point of his life, miracles, and predictions; and therefore it may not be improper, in this place, to give our readers a short sketch of some of the principal incidents of his life and transactions. About three or four years before the vulgar Christian *Æra* he was born at Tyana; a town of Cappadocia, (from whence he was named Tyaneus) of an ancient family, and rich parents; but to make his birth more resemble our Saviour's it is said, that Proteus, under the form of a sea god, acquainted his mother, that he himself was to be born of her, and that, at the same time, she was surrounded with swans, which assisted at her labour, and, by her singing and gaiety, seemed to presage the infant's future glory. However this be, while he was a youth, he was observed to have a great natural genius, an excellent memory, and was in his person so very beautiful, that he drew the eyes of all men upon him. When he was fourteen years of age, his father sent him to Tarsus in Cilicia, in order to study rhetoric; but he chose rather to apply himself to philosophy, and in a few years professed himself of the Pythagorean sect. Pursuant to this, he abstained from the flesh of all animals, as reputed impure, lived upon nothing but fruits and vegetables, and though he did not condemn the use of wine, yet

he chose rather to abstain from it, as being apt to disturb the serenity of the mind. He was a person of great mortification and abstinence, renounced marriage, professed continence, and affected to live in the temple of *Æsculapius*, to make it be believed that he was his peculiar favourite, and by his assistance was enabled to perform cures. Before he appeared in a public character, he kept silence for the space of five years; but, as he did not totally refrain from company, he usually spoke by signs, or, when there was a necessity for it, wrote some words. After this five years silence he came to Antioch, and there endeavoured to improve upon the pagan religion. The doctrines which he taught were delivered in a plain, preceptive manner, and with a better grace and authority than the philosophers at that time were accustomed to. After some stay at Antioch, he undertook a long journey, in order to converse with the brachmans of India, and in his way to visit the Persian magi. At Nineveh he contracted an acquaintance with one Damis, who attended him ever after, and wrote an account of his life, sayings, and actions, which have been transmitted to us in the history of Philostratus the sophist. Upon his return from the Indies he went to Ephesus, where he was received with all the tokens of respect imaginable, was followed and admired by people of all ranks and conditions, and by making his observations upon the chirping of a bird, which came to call its companions to pick up some corn which happened to be spilt, gained himself the reputation of a very great prophet. From Ephesus he removed to Athens, where he instructed the people in the ceremonies of their religion; in the manner and time and place of their offering up sacrifices, libations, and prayers, with other superstitious rites; and where, by commanding a devil to go out of a young man, and in token of his being dispossessed, to overturn a statue which stood by, he obtained the character of a mighty worker of miracles. In the twelfth year of Nero he came to Rome, where, having spoken some disrespectful words against the emperor, he was prosecuted by his favourite Tigellinus; but to his great surprise, when his prosecutor opened the bill of accusation against him, he found nothing but a fair piece of paper, without one word written in it; and not long after, upon his restoring a young woman, who seemed to fall down dead as she was going to be married, to life again, he was accounted by all a great magician at least, if not a person sent from heaven. When Nero ordered all philosophers to depart from Rome, he left the place, and (to pass by other circumstances of his itinerant life) he was in Asia Minor, when Domitian ordered him to be apprehended for speaking with some freedom against his tyranny,

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worker of miracles; and some, of late times, have been bold enough to name him in competition with our Blessed Saviour. But, besides that, this history of Apollonius has no other voucher than his servant Damis, (who was confessedly a weak and ignorant person, and consequently very capable of being imposed upon by the artful juggles of his master), the very miracles related therein, are, for the most part, ridiculous, unworthy the character of a prophet, and (as the learned Photius speaks) full of follies and monstrous tales. Nay, in the highest instance of his miraculous power, viz. "his raising a dead woman to life again," (a) Philostratus himself suspects (as he says the company did) that there was some confederacy and collusion in the matter; but if even it were not so, the doctrines which Apollonius taught, and the zeal he professed for the Pagan idolatry, together with his excessive pride, ambition, and vain affectation of di-

and sent to Rome; where, notwithstanding the emperor's cruel usage of him, he behaved with incredible magnanimity; and upon his trial being honourably acquitted, immediately vanished out of the court, and was that very day seen at Puteoli, which is very near fifty leagues from Rome. When Domitian was slain, he resided at Ephesus; and as he was then discouraging to the people, he gave them to understand, that the fatal stab was that moment given him, which accordingly proved true; for not long after an express arrived, that Domitian was dispatched in the manner he had mentioned, and Nerva unanimously declared emperor. Nerva, upon his accession to the throne, is said to have sent Apollonius a letter, desiring him to come and assist at his councils; to which he returned an answer by his servant Damis; but before Damis came back his master was dead; though as to the place and manner of his death we have no certain account. After his death, however, he had statues erected, and divine worship paid to him; but as he left few or no disciples behind him, his memory, which for a little while was greatly honoured, dwindled away by degrees, and upon the downfall of idolatry utterly ceased.

This account we have from Philostratus, who, from the commentaries of Damis, and a book of one Maximus, which he happened to light on, wrote the life of Apollonius above an hundred and twenty years after his death; but whoever looks into it, will see how much his fabulous history falls short of the gravity and simplicity of the Gospel. The truth is, Julia, the wife of the emperor Severus, affected to be thought a learned woman, and therefore she set up for a wit, which was attended with an immoderate desire and thirst after novelty. She was continually surrounded with poets, sophists, grammarians, &c. Philostratus made one of the number, and from her he had the memoirs of Damis, to which he added, either from common fame, or his own fancy, whatever he thought would hit the taste of the empress, or work himself into the favour of Caracalla, who had Apollonius in high esteem, and were both great admirers of the marvellous. So that, wherever the subject came not up to the magnificence which the author desired, he usually added all the ornaments which his imagination could invent, and, without any regard to truth, or even probability itself, (witness the conversation be-

tween Apollonius and the ghost of Achilles, and the long digressions on the panthers of Armenia, the elephants, the phoenix, the satyrs, the pygmies, &c.) made it not so much an history as a wild romance; in which light all the great men, not only Christians, but Pagans, and ancients as well as moderns, that have had occasion to mention it, look upon it. Philostratus, however, might have a farther design in writing the life of Apollonius: For as the Christian religion, by the strength of its miracles, had now made its way in the world, those who endeavoured to oppose it, and yet could not deny the reality of its facts, were at length reduced to this expedient, viz. to produce miracles in paganism, and every other argument that they thought Christianity could boast of, by way of contraposition. As therefore the actions of Jesus were handed down to us by the four evangelists, who wrote an account of the principal occurrences of his life; so they, in like manner, set about writing the lives of their philosophers, in hopes of finding their account in thus opposing miracles to miracles, and magic to the power of God: And for this reason they have been more especially careful to accommodate the transactions of their great men to the more remarkable passages in our Saviour's life, as the learned Huetius shews in many instances relating to Apollonius; and thereupon concludes in these words "Id præterea spectasse videtur Philostratus, ut invalescentem jam Christi fidem et doctrinam deprimeret, opposito hoc omnis doctrinæ sanctitatis, et mirificæ virtutis fictitio simulacro. Itaque ad Christi exemplar hanc expressit effigiem, et pleraque ex Jesu Christi historia Apollonio accommodavit, ne quid ethnici Christianis invidere possent." Vid. *Huet. Demonst. Evang.* pag. 566. *Fleury's Eccles. Hist.* *Tellemont's Hist. des Empereurs*, vol. ii. and a *Dissert.* at the end of the *Translat. of Houtteville's Crit. et Hist. Discourse*; [and *Mosheim's* translation of *Cudworth's Intellectual System*, ed. 2. vol. i. p. 397, &c. and vol. ii. p. 778, &c.; where it is completely proved that Apollonius was a fanatical Pythagorean, and his biographer a virulent though absurd enemy of Christ and his religion. I call him absurd, because, though he says that Apollonius was endowed with the Spirit of God—nay, was a god himself, he yet sends him to India to learn wisdom of the Brahmins!]

(a) Vid. *Vit. Apoll.* lib. iv. c. 16.

vine honours, are a plain indication that his miracles were false, and his most surprising performances, either the effects of magic, or downright cheat and imposture.

Tacitus (*a*) indeed tells us of two cures, one of a blind, and the other of a lame person, which Vespasian pretended to work at Alexandria; but whoever reflects on the situation of his affairs at that time, will perceive some reason to suspect a collusion. He was now in a dispute with himself what to do, whether to assume the Roman empire, or restore the ancient form of government, a commonwealth. The restoration of the latter was what Dion and Euphrates, two eminent philosophers, advised; but Apollonius (whom he likewise consulted upon this occasion) with great vehemence persuaded the contrary, and (being himself accustomed to such artifices) might, not improbably, suggest to Vespasian the necessity of some miracle or other, in order to recommend him to the people as a person highly favoured by the gods.

And indeed, if we consider what an obscure person, and of what mean original Vespasian was, there seems to be the greater reason why Apollonius, and others of that party, should think of some expedient or other to raise him a reputation in the world, answerable to the new station of life they had advised him to accept: And whoever considers farther (*b*) what various artifices were at that time made use of to procure an opinion of Divinity in the emperors, will not much wonder that such reports should be spread of them, or that certain persons should be suborned to feign such distempers, and then to give it out that the touch of the emperor's hand had cured them; though it must be confessed, (*c*) some are of opinion, that what is reported by Vespasian to this purpose cannot fairly be denied, and might perhaps be providentially intended, to give some dignity and superior character to a person who (in conjunction with his son Titus) was appointed by God to be a signal instrument of the Divine vengeance on the Jewish nation.

Allowing then that God, for wise ends of his Providence, might now and then permit some eminent person to do a real miracle; yet what is this to that vast number and great variety recorded of our Saviour, who, in the small space of his ministry, did more wonderful works of this kind than what Moses and all the prophets put together, from the earliest account of time that we read of, are known to have done?

(*d*) The Jews indeed, to swell the account of Moses's miracles, reckon each of those that he did in Egypt double; one as a miracle of justice, in punishing Pharaoh and his people, and the other as a miracle of mercy, in preserving the Israelites from the like destruction. But after all their pains and contrivance, the sum amounts to very little in comparison to the many that are recorded of our Blessed Saviour. The miracles of all the prophets put together, by the Jews own computation, do not equal those of Moses; and yet we must remember that Moses lived an hundred and twenty years, forty of which were one continued scene of action; and that the compass of the prophets, from the creation of the world to the destruction of the second temple, includes three thousand and some hundreds. Lay this together, and it evidently follows, that such extraordinary demonstrations of the Divine presence and power were very thin and sparingly exhibited, when set against the innumerable instances of them in the three or (at most) four years preaching of the Blessed Jesus. And if the wonders related by the evangelists, as done by himself in so short a time, do far exceed what both Moses and all the prophets did, what shall we say to those many more that are not related? What to the infinitely more still that were done by the apostles and disciples, in confirmation of the doctrine he had taught? Doubtless the miraculous power which he communicated to them was infinitely great, when, in order to obtain cures, (*e*) "the

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

(*a*) *Hist. lib. iv.*
monstration of the Messiah, part i. page 62.
(*e*) Acts v. 15, 16.

(*b*) *Stillingfleet's Orig. Sac. pag. 171.*

(*c*) *Vid. Kidder's De-*

(*d*) *Stanhope's Sermons at Boyle's Lectures.*

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people brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them;" and when from (a) "Paul's body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs and aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and evil spirits went out of them."

To sum up what has been said on this subject. Since a real miracle is such an operation as can be done by none but God, or such as are appointed by him, and was therefore, in all ages, acknowledged as an authentic proof of a Divine mission; since the prophets, in their predictions of the Messiah, represent him as working miracles of a kind and merciful nature, and our Saviour, when he entered upon his ministry, and assumed that character, displayed a wonderful power in works of the same kind; since that power could proceed from no other cause but a communication from God, and yet to imagine that God would communicate any part of his power to give sanction to an impostor, is a thing repugnant to his sacred attributes; since, upon examination, it appears that all the marks and characters of true miracles concur in the words of Jesus, but violent suspicions of trick and artifice in those that are named in competition with him; since, besides these characters of their truth, the number of those which he did (besides those that were done by persons acting in his name and by his authority) was greater than what all the true workers of miracles, viz. Moses and the prophets, had done through the whole compass of the Old Testament: Since these things appear to be thus, I say, we are under a necessity to conclude, that our Blessed Saviour must have been the true Messiah promised to the Jews, and characterised in the writings of their prophets; that he was the great "Messenger of the Covenant" sent from God; for (b) "if he had not been of God he could have done nothing;" and consequently, that the message which he delivered to us containing this covenant, or (what is all one) that the religion which he hath settled in the world, and confirmed by so many incontestible proofs (so far as the testimony of miracles is available) cannot but be true.

SUPPLEMENTARY DISSERTATION

ON THE MIRACLES OF OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR AND HIS APOSTLES.

[SINCE the period at which the preceding Dissertation was written, objections have been urged against the reality of miracles in general, and of the Gospel miracles in particular, which seem not to have occurred to the philosophers, who were contemporary with our author. As these objections have been lately stated in perspicuous and very forcible language, and disseminated among all classes of reading people, with the art which distinguishes one of our most popular literary journals, (c) I am unwilling to dismiss from my hands a work of this kind, without *attempting* at least to expose the sophistry which has been thus employed to undermine the foundations of our holy religion.

A miracle has been defined—"An effect or event contrary to the established constitution or course of things," or "a sensible deviation from the known laws of nature." To this definition I am not aware that any objection has ever been made, or indeed can be

(a) Acts xix. 11, 12.

(b) John. ix. 33.

(c) See the Edinburgh Review, No. 46.

made. That the visible world is governed by stated general rules or laws; or that there is an order of physical causes and effects established in every part of the system of nature, which falls under our observation, is a fact, which is not, and cannot be, controverted. Effects which are produced by the regular operation of these laws or physical causes, or which are conformable to the established course of events, are said to be *natural*; and every palpable deviation from this constitution of the natural system, and the correspondent course of events in it, is called a *miracle*.

From Matt. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

If this definition of a miracle be accurate, no event can be justly deemed miraculous merely because it is strange, or even to us unaccountable; for it may be nothing more than the regular effect of some physical cause operating according to an established though unknown law of nature. In this country earthquakes happen but rarely, and at no stated periods of time; and for monstrous births perhaps no *particular* and satisfactory account can be given; yet an earthquake is as regular an effect of the established laws of nature as the bursting of a bomb-shell, or the movements of a steam engine; and no man doubts, but that, under particular circumstances unknown to him, the monster is nature's genuine issue. It is therefore necessary, before we can pronounce an event to be a true miracle, that the circumstances under which it was produced be known, and that the common course of nature be in some degree understood; for in all those cases in which we are totally ignorant of nature, it is impossible to determine what is, or what is not, a deviation from her course. Miracles, therefore, are not, as some have represented them, appeals to our ignorance. They suppose some antecedent knowledge of the course of nature, without which no proper judgment can be formed concerning them; though with it their reality may be so apparent as to leave no room for doubt or disputation.

Thus, were a physician to give instantly sight to a blind man, by anointing his eyes with a chemical preparation, which we had never before seen, and to the nature and qualities of which we were absolute strangers, the cure would to us undoubtedly be *wonderful*; but we could not pronounce it *miraculous*, because it might be the physical effect of the operation of the unguent on the eye. But were he to give sight to his patient merely by commanding him to receive it, or by anointing his eyes with spittle, we should with the utmost confidence pronounce the cure to be a miracle; because we know perfectly that neither the human voice, nor human spittle has, by the established constitution of things, any such power over the diseases of the eye. No one is now ignorant, that persons apparently dead are often restored to their families and friends, by being treated, during suspended animation, in the manner recommended by the *Humane Society*. To the vulgar, and sometimes even to men of science, these resuscitations appear very *wonderful*; but as they are known to be effected by physical agency, they can never be considered as *miraculous* deviations from the laws of nature, though they may suggest to different minds very different notions of the state of death. On the other hand, no one could doubt of his having witnessed a real miracle, who had seen a person that had been four days dead, come alive out of the grave at the *call* of another, or who had even beheld a person exhibiting all the common *evidences* of death, instantly resuscitated merely by being *desired* to live.

Thus easy is it to distinguish between such miracles as those of our Blessed Saviour, and the most wonderful phænomena produced by physical causes, operating according to the established laws of nature. Yet it seems difficult to admit, on any occasion, a *suspension* of these laws; and we may safely pronounce, that they have never been suspended but for some important purpose, which could not otherwise have been accomplished. "Events, says an able writer, (a) may be so extraordinary, that they can hardly be established by any testimony;" and the instance which he gives is of an event, in

(a) In the Edinburgh Review already referred to.

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which I am not aware that any law of nature would be suspended. "We would not give credit to a man who should affirm that he saw a hundred dice thrown in the air, and that they all fell on the same faces." To such an affirmation I certainly would give no credit; for though I think that a hundred dice *might* all fall on the same faces without the suspension of any known law of nature, such an event is so extremely improbable, and of so very little importance in itself, that it would require the evidence of more than one witness to establish its credibility. The author however considers it as the violation of some unknown law of nature, and immediately infers from its not being admitted on the report of one man, "that the probability of the *continuance* of the laws of nature is superior to every other evidence, and to that of historical facts the best established." In this inference I cannot acquiesce; but before entering into any discussion of the subject, it will be necessary to ascertain with some precision what is meant by *the laws of nature*, and whence those laws had their origin.

If this profound mathematician (a) be, as his countrymen in general were some years ago, convinced, either that there is no God; or that if there be a God, he is not the moral Governor of the world; or that the present laws of nature, or the established course of things, have existed from all eternity independent of him and of every intellectual being, he is perfectly consistent when he says, that no weight of testimony could prove the miraculous suspension of these laws. It would indeed be ridiculous to *talk of miracles* to the atheist or fatalist; for if there were no God, or if God were not the moral as well as physical *Governor* of the world, the very notion of miracles, as it is entertained by Christians, would involve in it a contradiction and absurdity. It is only with THEISTS, therefore, and such theists as, admitting the moral attributes of God, believe that the established course of things, or the laws of nature, were established by HIM for the accomplishment of some great and good purpose, that any discussion can be carried on respecting the evidence necessary to prove the temporary suspension of any one of these laws; for if they be all necessary, and have been from eternity, it is as impossible to suspend them by any power or for any purpose, as it is to render a geometrical axiom false.

That the world, in its present state, has not existed from eternity, has been a thousand times demonstrated (b); but at present I take this fact for granted, because it is only to those by whom it is admitted, that what I have to urge in evidence of the Gospel miracles is addressed. Every theist who acknowledges the moral attributes of God, admits, on the testimony of universal history, sacred and profane, supported as that testimony is by the phenomena of nature, that the present magnificent system was once in a state of chaos, and that it must have been brought, from that state, into its present beautiful order so plainly indicative of design and benevolence, by that God in whom he believes. The laws therefore by which all its movements are directed; by which all the planets primary and secondary revolve round the sun; by which animals and vegetables grow and perish and succeed each other; by which passions and appetites are generated in the human mind; by which mankind are enabled to express their thoughts by articulate sounds; by which the atoms of matter tend towards each other, and when brought into contact cohere together; and in one word, by which every phenomenon corporeal and intellectual is produced, must have been established by him. But of being governed by *laws* in the proper sense of the word, as men in society are governed by the acts or decrees of the legislature, brute matter is not capable. What then is meant by the laws of nature? Let the theist, to whom I am addressing myself, revolve the question seriously in his own mind, and he will find that the laws of nature can be nothing else than the volition or volitions of that God, who brought the world from the

(a) *Laplace*.
there referred to.

(b) See the Introduction to the History of the Old Testament, and the Works

state of chaos into that of order. When by his fiat he separated the parts of the heterogeneous mass, and formed them into those beautiful systems which we behold, it was his *will* that certain events in each system should regularly succeed each other, and that the different systems should be so connected among themselves, as to promote some great and wise end which he had in view. It is difficult—I think indeed impossible—to conceive any other end, which a Being all perfect could have in view, than the diffusion of happiness; but the greatest quantity of happiness can be diffused only among the greatest numbers of beings susceptible of it.

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23 Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

Inanimate beings are not capable either of happiness or of misery; but every being endowed with sense is capable of both; and every being endowed with reason as well as sense, is capable of both in a still greater degree. We must conclude, therefore, that it was for the accommodation of sentient and rational beings that events were made to succeed each other in a regular order, and that the order made choice of by perfect wisdom was the best that could have been chosen for promoting the happiness of the whole sentient and intelligent creation. This being the case, we may rest assured that no deviation from that order ever has been, or ever will be, permitted, but for some very important purpose foreseen and provided for by that *fiat* which established what are called the laws of nature; and that if there had been among the creatures of God no free agents, there never would have been such a deviation from the ordinary course of events, as that which constitutes a miracle. But among those creatures there are free agents, and man is one of them, whose happiness depends in a very great degree on their own conduct; whilst that conduct cannot, like the movements of inanimate matter, be directed in one determinate course by impulse or pressure. Without entering at all into the question of liberty and necessity, I trust that I may assume, as a truth unquestioned and unquestionable, that the relation between motive and action is something quite different from that between cause and effect in physics, and that it is by motives, and not physical causes, that the actions of men are directed.

Let us now suppose that, when the Creator of the world was about to establish that course of events, which we call the laws of nature, in such order as he knew would produce the greatest quantity of happiness to the whole sentient and intelligent creation, he foresaw that man, for whose accommodation chiefly we must suppose this earth to have been fitted up, would bring himself into such circumstances, that his happiness would become impossible, unless some one of these laws should for a time be suspended; may we not suppose that a Being of infinite power and wisdom might make provision for such an event in the very establishment of those laws? To control by force the freedom of the human will would be to destroy that very nature on which depends the greatest happiness of which man is capable (*a*); but might not some portion of inanimate matter be diverted for a short time from its regular course without the smallest injury to any sentient or intelligent being in the universe? In the journal to which I have already referred, it is confidently affirmed that it could not.

“Suppose a man, says this critic, not at all versed in astronomy, who considers the moon merely as a luminous circle that, with certain irregularities, goes round the earth from east to west nearly in twenty-four hours, rising once and setting once in that interval. Let this man be told, from some authority, that he is accustomed to respect, that on a certain day it had been observed at London, that the moon did not set at all, but was visible above the horizon for twenty-four hours:—there is little doubt that, after making some difficulty about it, he would come at last to be convinced of the truth of the assertion. In this he could not be accused of any *extraordinary* or *irrational* credulity. The experience he had of the uniform setting and rising of the moon was but very limited; and the fact alleged might not appear to him more extraordinary than

(*a*) See this completely proved in *Law's* edition of *King's* Essay on the Origin of Evil.

A. M. 4035,
&c. or 5141.
Ann. Dom.
31, &c.
Vulg. Ær. 30.

many of the irregularities to which that luminary is subject. Let the same thing be told to an astronomer, in whose mind the rising and setting of the moon were necessarily connected with a vast number of other appearances; who knew, for example, that the supposed fact could not have happened, unless the moon had exceedingly deviated from that orbit in which it has always moved; or the position of the earth's axis had been suddenly changed; or that *the atmospherical refraction had been increased to an extent that was never known*. Any of all these events must have affected such a vast number of others, that, *as no such thing was ever before perceived*, an incredible body of evidence is brought to ascertain the continuance of the moon in her regular course. *The barrier that generalization and the explanation of causes thus raises against credulity and superstition*,—the way in which it multiplies the evidence of experience, is highly deserving of attention, and is likely to have a great influence on the future fortunes of the human race. *Against the uniformity, therefore, of such laws, it is impossible for testimony to prevail.*"

Certainly, it is impossible for such testimony as that supposed, to prevail against the uniformity of any law of nature; for, as I have already observed, if those laws be necessary and eternal, their uniformity can never be interrupted for any purpose or by any power, and if they have been established by a God of perfect wisdom and goodness, we may be assured that they will never be suspended for so unworthy a purpose as only to make the citizens of London stare, and enable one of them to try the credulity of some clown, who believes the moon to consist, according to the Scotch expression, of *green cheese*! What such a ridiculous tale as this, supposing it ever to have been seriously told, would have to do with *superstition*, it is not easy to conceive; but the ingenious critic might as well have told us in plain terms, that it is impossible for testimony to render credible what is said of the sun and moon standing still (a) at the call of Joshua; for even his friend, who believes the moon to be a mere luminous circle of *cheese*, if at all conversant with his Bible, must perceive that this is what he intended to say under the cover of a clumsy apologue.

If the laws of nature be the work of FATE, I readily agree with him that the story of the sun and moon standing still cannot be rendered credible by any testimony. If those laws be, as I believe them to be, the constitution of an Almighty and infinitely wise and good God, I likewise readily agree with him, that no testimony could render credible the phenomena of the sun and moon's standing still, but for some important purpose that could not have been otherwise so well accomplished. What the purpose was for which the children of Israel were separated from the idolatrous nations around them, and established in the land of Canaan, has been fully stated elsewhere; and the theist, with whom I am now arguing, will admit that, whether it was real or not, that purpose was of great importance. Great however as that purpose was, for the reasons elsewhere assigned, no testimony could prevail with me to believe, that, for the sake of it, the rotation of the earth on its axis, and the course of the moon in her orbit, were literally arrested, unless the same Almighty power wrought another miracle at the same instant to prevent the natural consequences of the sudden cessation of motions so rapid. Without this second miracle, I am as fully aware as our critic, that those events produced by the first, must have not only affected a vast number of others, but been also productive of mischief—such as the reducing of the earth to a state of chaos—more than sufficient to balance the good expected from the miracle;—nay, that they would have rendered the miracle itself useless by destroying those for whose instruction it was meant to be wrought. I confess, however, that I do not perceive what injury could have been done to any sentient or intelligent being in the solar system, or how the different planets, of which that system is composed, could have been disturbed in their

courses, by the extraordinary atmospherical refraction of part of the solar rays, by which I believe the miracle in question to have been affected (*a*). It is very true that my knowledge of the sciences of astronomy and optics is very limited when compared with that of Laplace and his friend; but I may surely be allowed to know more of them than the man, who, without displaying any *irrational* credulity, believes that on a certain day the moon had at London, *forgotten to set*. I have likewise conversed often, on the subject of miracles in general, and of that of Joshua in particular, with philosophical laymen, some of whom, with respect to their knowledge of optics and astronomy, might, without presumption, have been brought into comparison even with *Laplace*; and they saw as little danger, as I do, to any part of the creation, from a temporary increase of the refractive power of the atmosphere to any extent. Indeed all philosophical theists, with whom I have conversed freely on such subjects, have held the will of God to be the immediate *cause* (I mean *efficient cause*) of every law of inanimate nature, as well as of every deviation from those laws, which deviations were foreseen and provided for from the beginning, when “the world first rose out of chaos.” I confess likewise that I see not how the restoration of a dead man to life, or any other miracle recorded of our Lord in the Gospels, could affect such a vast number of others, as to bring what our critic calls an *incredible* body of evidence against the reality of those miracles. The most astonishing of them all has long appeared to me to be the multiplication of *the loaves and fishes*, because it seems to imply the power of creation; and we certainly have the evidence of uniform experience, as far as experience can be had in such a case, that not an atom of matter has been either created or annihilated since the beginning of the world. The quantity however of new matter added, on those two occasions, to the old, supposing such to have been the case, was comparatively so small, that the philosophers, who “weigh not only the mountains of the earth,” but even the earth itself and all the planetary system, “in a pair of scales,” and who hope, by the aid of “a calculus sufficiently powerful, to make near approaches to OMNISCIENCE,” will admit that it could not have *greatly* disturbed the motions of the earth and moon, or any other planet!

On the principles of pure theism, therefore, though certainly not on those of atheism or fatalism, the *possibility* of miracles—and even of such miracles as those of our Lord,—will surely be admitted: but the great question is, what evidence is sufficient to render them credible? The Christians say that the evidence of testimony is sufficient for this purpose, and indeed that no other evidence can be had. That the truth of the Gospel miracles admits, in the present age, of no other evidence than that of testimony, will be readily admitted; but our critic contends, as Hume had done before him, that the improbability of the violation of the order of those events, of which the course is known from experience to be perfectly uniform, is so strong, that no testimony can prevail against it. “It will always be more wonderful, he says, that the violation of such order should have taken place, than that any number of witnesses should have been deceived themselves, or should be disposed to deceive others.”

If this doctrine be true, how many facts have taken place in nature, or have been said by philosophers to take place in nature, which not one man of ten thousand, or even ten millions, can rationally believe to have happened? “That testimony derives all its force from experience,” says the critic, “seems very certain;” and Hume, as he acknowledges, had said the same thing before him. But if this be true, upon what evidence can I and hundreds of millions beside me believe, that showers of meteoric stones have, in different ages and distant nations, fallen from the atmosphere on the earth? I never saw one such stone fall, and I have the evidence of uniform experience that the atmosphere does not *regularly* generate metallic stones. Every man who is in the same predicament with me, has the same immense weight of experience to place in the ba-

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

(a) See the Appendix to Dissertation I. Book v. chap. i. of this Work.

A. M. 4035,
&c. or 5441.
Ann. Dom.
31. &c.
Vulg. Ær. 30.

lance against the testimony of the comparatively very small number who say that they had witnessed such stones fall from the heavens; and if it be very certain that testimony derives all its force from experience, how can it be possible for hundreds of millions of men, possessing common sense, to admit, in opposition to their own uniform experience, the testimony of some dozens of people who may have been deceived themselves, or disposed, like the London citizen with his moon of *cheese*, to deceive others? It is vain to say that we have the experience of ages, and of numbers of chemists who have examined the stones, in corroboration of the testimony that they fell from the heavens; for in this argument where experience of the uniformity of the laws of nature is opposed to testimony bearing witness that those laws have been occasionally suspended, no experience can be admitted but *individual, personal* experience. The experience of ages and of distant nations—indeed the experience of every individual but myself is known to me only by *testimony*; and is it possible that any philosopher can seriously contend that *testimony* derives all its force from that experience, of which we never could have known any thing—of which, indeed, we never could have heard, but through the medium of *testimony*?

This is surely not possible, and therefore it must be by every man's individual personal experience, by which, on the principles of Hume and his followers, the truth of testimony is to be tried? If so, I ought not to believe that there has ever been an earthquake, for I never felt the shock of one, though I have heard of many, and of some which were *said* to have been felt by numbers in the very town where I then was! I ought not to believe that a monstrous child was ever born of a woman, for I never saw a human being, who could with any propriety be called a monster, whilst I know, by uniform personal experience, that every monstrous birth, if there have been any such births, has been a deviation from the regular course of nature. In vain shall I be told, that earthquakes may be accounted for in certain circumstances, and shewn to be produced by the operation of the laws of nature; for those circumstances are probably assumed for the purpose, and whether they be or not, they are made known to me only by testimony, which I ought to disregard, because directly contrary to my uniform experience.

But even this mode of converting testimony into experience, cannot be had recourse to in the case of the meteoric stones; for according to one of the most scientific chemists of the age (*a*), "it would be absurd, in the present state of our knowledge, to attempt any explanation of the manner in which they are formed; for not even a *conjectural* cause for them in the smallest degree probable can be assigned." We are told indeed that the testimony produced in support of the origin of those stones, "has been confirmed by a scrupulous examination into the natural history of the facts (the stones) themselves. When the stones which were said to have fallen from the heavens came to be chemically analyzed, they were found to have every where the same characters, and to consist of the same ingredients, nearly in the same proportions;" whilst no other stones have anywhere been found of precisely the same character. "Here therefore, says the reviewer of Laplace, we have a testimony confirmed, and rendered quite independent of our previous knowledge of the veracity of the witnesses."

This inference I cannot admit; nor can I conceive by what rule of logic it is drawn from the premises. Not to insist on the unquestionable fact, that the result of the chemical analysis of the stones, can be known to those myriads, who were not present when it was made, only by *testimony*, all that seems to me to have been proved by that analysis is, that the stones in question are of one and the same species, and that the species itself is very uncommon. These two facts I admit to have been completely proved, for I have no hesitation to receive the *testimony* of the chemist by whom they were ascertain-

(a) See Thomson's System of Chemistry, Ed. 3. vol. 4. p. 163, &c.

ed; but why stones of a singular character, found in different regions of the earth, should therefore be inferred to have fallen from the heavens, I confess that I am yet to learn. That a stone of two or three tons weight, as some of those meteoric stones have been, should be generated in the higher regions of the atmosphere, and float in a horizontal direction over various countries, at the distance of sixty miles from the earth, is directly contrary not only to all *my experience*, but likewise to all that I know of the constitution of the atmosphere, as well as of the law of gravitation—the best ascertained, perhaps, of all the laws of corporeal nature! Am I then to reject with scorn all that I have been told of ignited stones falling from the heavens? Undoubtedly I *ought* to do so, if testimony derives all its force from experience; for though those stones have been chemically analyzed, and their composition ascertained by experiments, not an individual of the human race can believe that they fell from the atmosphere, on any other evidence than the unsupported testimony of those very few persons who have *said* that they *saw* them fall. “But it will always be more wonderful that masses of iron, pyrites, and earth, of the weight of two or three tons, should be formed in the higher regions of the atmosphere, and even float horizontally in that rare medium, as a log of wood floats in water, than that any number of witnesses, who affirm that they saw them fall, should have been deceived themselves, or disposed to deceive others.” They may have had their origin in the heart of the earth, and been forced upwards by subterraneous fire; and this may seem the more probable, that the principal ingredient in them is iron in the metallic state; that they have been generally found hot and buried to a considerable depth in the earth; and that such eruptions from the bowels of the earth, through the craters of volcanoes, have frequently been accompanied by appearances in the air which might easily be mistaken by a few individuals—almost stupified with astonishment, for meteors descending from the heavens.

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

In a word, it appears to me that there is not one objection urged by Hume, Laplace, or any of their pupils, against the sufficiency of testimony to prove the reality of the Gospel miracles, which does not hold with at least equal force against the reality of those showers of meteoric stones which are said to have fallen in all the quarters of the globe. The truth, however, is, that these objections are in both cases founded on a palpable mistake. Testimony is so far from deriving all its force from experience, that as was justly observed long ago, (a) it is the sole foundation of by far the greater part of what the opponents of the Gospel call firm, unalterable, and universal experience; and that if we did not, in certain circumstances, repose implicit confidence in testimony, every man's knowledge of events would be confined to those, which had fallen under the immediate observation of his own senses. Hume seems to have been perfectly aware of this, when he supposed a case, in which, were it ever to occur, testimony would be sufficient to establish the credibility even of a miracle.

“No testimony, says he, (b) is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind, that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavours to establish—When any one tells me, that he saw a dead man restored to life, I immediately consider with myself, whether it be more probable, that this person should either deceive or be deceived, or that the fact, which he relates, should really have happened. I weigh the one miracle against the other, and according to the superiority which I discover, I pronounce my decision, and always reject the greater miracle. If the falsehood of his testimony would be more miraculous than the event which he relates; then, and not till then, can he pretend to command my belief or opinion.”

There is some inaccuracy of language in talking of *greater* and *less* miracles when Omnipotence is supposed to have performed them all; but it is no more than justice to acknowledge that the author admitted, in a note, that all real miracles are equally easy

(a) By Dr Campbell in his admirable Dissertation on Miracles.

(b) Essay on Miracles.

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&c. or 5441.
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31, &c.
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to the Almighty, by observing "that the raising of a feather, when the wind wants ever so little force requisite for that purpose, is as real a miracle as the raising of a house or a ship into the air." By *greater* and *less* miracles therefore, and by always rejecting the *greater*, it is evident that he meant nothing more than that of two or more deviations from the known laws of nature, one might in itself, when contemplated with all its circumstances, appear less probable than the others; and that if he could not reject them all, his principles would compel him to reject that which should appear least probable when viewed in all its bearings.

This seems to be a just maxim; and therefore if it can be shown that the testimony, given by the apostles and other first preachers of the Gospel to the miracles of their Lord, would, on the supposition that those miracles were not really performed, have been as great a deviation from the known laws of nature as the miracles themselves, the balance must be considered as evenly poised by opposite miracles; and whilst it shall continue so, the judgment must remain in a state of suspense. But if it shall appear that, in this case, the false testimony would have been a deviation from the laws of nature much less probable in itself than the miracles recorded in the Gospels, the balance will be instantly destroyed; and by Mr Hume's maxim, we must reject the supposition of falsehood in the testimony of the apostles, and admit the miracles of Christ to have been really performed.

In this argument it is needless to waste time in proving that those miracles, as they are represented in the writings of the New Testament, were of such a nature, and performed before so many witnesses, that no imposition could possibly be practised on the senses of those who affirm that they were present. From every page of the Gospels this is so evident, that the philosophical adversaries of the Christian faith never suppose the apostles to have been themselves deceived *, but boldly accuse them of bearing false witness. But if this accusation be well founded, their testimony itself is as great a miracle, or, in other words, as real a deviation from the laws of nature, as any which they record of themselves or of their Master.

That testimony does not derive all its force from experience has been already proved; and is indeed little less than self-evident from the unquestionable fact that the earliest assent, which is given to testimony by children who have no experience, is unlimited, whilst the experience of age renders men distrustful. Exactly the reverse would be the case, were our belief in testimony the result of experience. It has therefore been thought that the beneficent Author of nature, who intended man to be a social creature, hath implanted in every human breast an instinctive propensity to speak truth, and likewise a disposition to confide implicitly in the veracity of others; and it cannot be denied that children believe whatever is told them, and that the greatest liar on earth speaks a hundred truths for one falsehood. That truth is indeed always at the door of the lips; that it requires no effort to bring it forth; that in ordinary cases men speak truth uninfluenced by any motive moral or political; and that lying is never practised by the worst of men without some effort to accomplish some end, are positions which daily experience renders it impossible to question. But notwithstanding all this, I do not think that truth is spoken by an *original* and *instinctive* principle; because men

* The reviewer of Laplace, so often referred to, speaking of the improbability of a hundred dice thrown at once all falling on the same faces, adds—"If we had ourselves been spectators of such an event, we would not believe our own eyes, till we had scrupulously examined all the circumstances, and assured ourselves that there was no trick nor deception. After such an examination, we would not hesitate to admit it, notwithstanding its great improbability; and no one would have recourse to an inversion of the

laws of vision in order to account for it." This acute writer therefore must allow, that no trick or deception could have been practised in the resurrection of the widow's son at Nain, in the resurrection of Lazarus, or in the feeding of five thousand men on five barley loaves and two small fishes. Either these miracles must have been really performed, or the evangelists must have wilfully borne false witness; for there is no other alternative.

appear not to be impelled by instinct to speak any articulate language at all; and it is surely inconceivable that instinct should teach the use of arbitrary and artificial signs, such as the words of every language undoubtedly are, or that between such signs and ideas any *natural* relation should ever be formed.

From Matth. xii. 1. Mark ii. 23. Luke vi. 1. John v. 1. to Matth. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 37. John vii. 1.

Truth is the conformity of those words or other signs by which things are represented, to the things themselves; and things themselves are what they are independent of us, our instincts, and perceptions. When we have precise and adequate ideas or notions of objects, and when those ideas or notions are related to each other, as the objects themselves are related, we are in possession of knowledge, or what may be called *mental truth*. In this case there is a *real* and *natural* connection between the signs and the things signified; for we cannot frame one original and simple idea, which has no archetype in nature, nor can *one* object distinctly perceived, generate in our minds the ideas or notions that are generated by *other* and quite *different* objects. Here external things are the objects, and ideas are the signs, which, when they are in conformity to the things signified by them constitute truth; and this truth depends not in the smallest degree on the *moral* dispositions of him, on whose mind it is impressed. These truths are the truths of God spoken alike, and with equal faithfulness to all who have powers of perception to receive them; and in the case under consideration, they were received as well by the Jewish Pharisees as by the apostles of Christ.

But in human testimony the ideas in the mind of the speaker are the things signified, and the words of the language spoken are the signs by which they are expressed; and when these things and signs are in conformity to each other, the words uttered express so much truth. Now, though in this case there is no *natural* connection between the signs and the things signified—between ideas or notions in the mind and articulate vocal sounds, yet it is obvious, that, without a violent effort of the speaker to the contrary, they must always be in conformity with each other, because, in every language, there are words appropriated to the purpose of denoting every idea, and every relation of ideas, which can be expressed by that language; and in the mind of every man those ideas, relations of ideas, and their appropriate *words*, have been constantly associated or linked together from the time that he first learned to speak. So intimate is this association, and so impossible to be broken, that whoever will pay sufficient attention to the operations of his own mind, will find that he *thinks* as well as *speaks* in some language; and that in cogitation he runs over silently and habitually, those sounds which in speaking he actually utters. Hence it is, that hardly any man has written in perfect purity a language in which he has not been accustomed to *think*; and hence too, I believe, it is, that so many men of deep thinking have been remarked for the practice of *speaking to themselves*.

If this be so, it is impossible that a man, without some effort, should ever speak any thing but truth; for the *ideas* of what he has seen or heard, &c. are not of his manufacture; they are generated in his mind by external objects according to the established *laws of nature*; and till they be effaced from his memory, they must always, by the law of association, which is one of those laws *, make their appearance there

* That the association of ideas not only with one another, but also with the articulate sounds by which they are denominated in that language which is vernacular to us, is a law of nature, is incontrovertible. It is a law which extends in some degree to the inferior animals: for, if they were not under the influence of it, neither the dog nor the horse could be trained to render those numberless services to man, which are actually rendered by both. It seems to be a fact as universal in the animal kingdom as gravitation is

in the material world, and is therefore, equally with gravitation, a law of nature unchangeable but by him whose *fiat* constituted the universe and all the beings—animated and inanimate—which it contains, what we know them by experience to be. Attempts have been made to explain both these laws of nature, or, in other words, to assign for them *physical* causes; but all such attempts have hitherto failed. Newton threw out a query, whether gravitation might not be caused by an ethereal fluid pervading the whole corpo-

A. M. 4035,
&c. or 5141.
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Vulg. Ær. 31,
&c. or 30.

with all their mutual relations, and in their appropriate dress. In the very act of learning to *speak*, we necessarily learn to speak the *truth*; for what I have called *mental truth* is impressed upon our minds by him who cannot err, and were we not to employ words for the expression of that truth exactly as they are employed by those with whom we converse, our language (if language it could be called) would be unintelligible jargon; and we could neither declare our wants, nor ask relief with any hope of success. *Children beginning* to speak may indeed often utter untruths or nonsense without any motive, and merely from mistake; and this indeed they often do, because the ideas and words of children have neither been long nor closely linked together; but it is impossible that a man, however wicked, should habitually, and without motives, lie on ordinary occasions, unless the constituent principles of his nature have been totally altered; unless his brain has been disordered by disease; unless his ideas and notions have been disarranged; and all the associations which have taken place among them from his infancy have been dissolved, and quite contrary associations formed in their stead.

We know indeed, by woeful experience, that immoral men occasionally utter falsehoods with a view to deceive. But in these cases they are influenced by some motive either of hope or of terror; the falsehood is always uttered with an effort; and so very strong is the association between words and ideas, that the truth will at times break out in spite of all their endeavours to conceal it; so that the end or middle of a false narrative, if it be of any length, and include a number of particular events or incidents, is commonly inconsistent with the beginning. We entertain a suspicion of falsehood, when those who relate the same tale, either palpably contradict each other, or agree in every minute circumstance, and speak throughout the very same language—when they are but few in number and of a doubtful character—when they have an interest in what they affirm or deny—when they deliver their testimony either with hesitation, or with superfluous and violent asseverations of its truth; because all these are circumstances which have been generally observed to accompany false witness. It is likewise with reluctance that we admit a narrative of events entirely different from every thing that we have hitherto seen or heard; because we may not be certain that the narrator is not under some influence to deceive us in matters concerning which we have nothing but his testimony on which to ground our judgment. But in every case, where the fact recorded is in itself possible, and attributed to a cause which we know to be adequate; where a competent number of witnesses * had sufficient means of information, and were certainly under no inducement to deceive, testimony is complete evidence, however extraordinary the fact may be; because no fact, which is known to have had an adequate cause, can be so incredible, as that a number of men of sound understanding should act in a manner inconsistent with the fundamental principles of human na-

real universe; and Dr Hartley attempted to account for the great law of intellectual association, by supposing that vibrations and vibratuncles in the brain are the physical causes of perception and memory. These are mere hypotheses, which, though they were granted, would not solve a single difficulty in the phenomena, for which they were respectively invented to account. It is better therefore to assume at once the two universal facts of *gravitation*, and what has been called the *association of ideas*, as two laws—the one of brute *corporeal* nature, and the other of *animated* nature as it is observed at least on this globe; for though we were to discover some *physical* cause for each of those phenomena, we should be obliged to resolve its operations at last, as we now resolve the

phenomena themselves, into the will of the Almighty.

* Should it be asked what number of witnesses I call competent, I beg leave to reply, that it will be greater or less according to circumstances. In cases where there is no danger of the senses being deceived, two men of integrity and intelligence deserve equal credit with two thousand; but where there is particular occasion for good organs, whether of sight or hearing, the greater the number, the greater will be our security. To this must be added, that as hardly any individual can pay *equal* attention to *all* the circumstances of any complicated event; we may expect a *fuller* and *more accurate* account of the *whole* from several witnesses than from only one.

ture, or be able, if so disposed, to dissolve every association which had been formed in the mind of each of them from his infancy, and form new ones, all agreeing exactly with one another, and yet all contrary to the truth.

If this reasoning be just, and if the testimony of the apostles to their own and their Master's miracles be false, it follows undeniably, either that they concerted a consistent scheme of falsehood, and agreed to publish it at every hazard; or that God had dissolved all the associations, which had been formed in their minds, of ideas of sense with the words of language, and arbitrarily formed new associations all in exact conformity with each other, but all in direct contradiction to truth. One or other of these events *must* have taken place; because, upon the supposition of falsehood, there is no other alternative. But such a dissolution and formation of associations of ideas with words, as is supposed in the latter event, is as great a deviation from the established laws of nature, or, in other words, as real a miracle as the resurrection of a man from the dead; and all real miracles being acknowledged to be equally great, either of these could have been performed only by a power equal to the performance of the other.

Nor would the supposed voluntary agreement of the apostles, in such a scheme of falsehood as they are said to have published to the world, be an event less miraculous than the Divine interposition for the unworthy purpose implied in the former hypothesis. When they sat down to fabricate their pretended revelation, and to contrive a series of miracles, to which they were all to appeal for its truth, it is plain, since they proved successful in their daring enterprise, that they must have clearly foreseen every possible circumstance in which they could be placed, and have prepared consistent answers to every question that could be put to them by their most inveterate and most enlightened enemies; by the statesman, the lawyer, the philosopher, and the priest. That such foreknowledge as this would have been miraculous, will not surely be denied; since it forms the very attribute which we find it most difficult to allow even to God himself (a). It is not, however, the *only* miracle, which this supposition would compel us to admit. The very *resolution* of the apostles to propagate the belief of false miracles in support of such a religion as that which is taught in the New Testament, would have been as wide a deviation from the laws of nature, and therefore as great a miracle as the mind of man has ever conceived.

When they formed this design, either they must have hoped to *succeed*, or they must have been convinced that they should *fail*, in their undertaking; and in either case *they chose evil*, and what they *knew* to be *unmixed evil*, for its own sake! They could not, if they foresaw that they should *fail*, look for any thing but that contempt, disgrace, and persecution, which were then the inevitable consequences of an unsuccessful endeavour to overthrow the established religion. Nor could their prospects be brighter on the supposition of their *success*. As they knew themselves to be false witnesses and impious deceivers, they could have no hope beyond the grave; and by determining to oppose all the religious systems, superstitions, and prejudices of the age in which they lived, they wilfully exposed themselves to inevitable misery in the present life, to insult and imprisonment, to stripes and death. Nor can it be alleged that they might look forward to power and affluence, when they should through sufferings have converted their countrymen; for so desirous were they of obtaining nothing but *misery* as the end of their mission, that they made their own persecution a test of the truth of their doctrines. They introduced the Master, from whom they professed to have received those doctrines, as telling them, that "they were sent forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; that they should be delivered up to councils, and scourged in synagogues; *that they*

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1

(a) See Dr Beattie's Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth, and Dr Pearson's Warburtonian Lectures.

A. M. 4035,
& c. or 5441.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Ær. 31,
& c. or 30.

should be hated of all men for his name's sake ; that the brother should deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child ; and that he who took not up his cross and followed him, was not worthy of him."

The very system of religion, therefore, which they invented and resolved to impose upon mankind, was so contrived, that the *worldly* prosperity of its first preachers, and even their *exemption from persecution*, was incompatible with its *success*. Had these clear predictions of the Author of that religion, under whom the apostles and evangelists acted only as ministers, not been verified, all mankind must have instantly perceived that their claim to inspiration was groundless, and that Christianity was a scandalous and impudent imposture. All this the apostles could not but foresee when they formed their plan for deluding the world. Whence it follows, that when they resolved to support their pretended revelation by an appeal to forged miracles, they *wilfully*, and with *their eyes open*, exposed themselves to *inevitable misery*, whether they should succeed or fail in their enterprise ; and that they concerted their measures in such a manner as not to admit a *possibility* of recompence to themselves, either in this life, or in that which is to come.—But if there be a law of nature, for the reality of which we have better evidence than we have for others, it is, “ that no man can choose *misery* for its *own sake*,” or make the acquisition of it the *ultimate end* of all his pursuits. The existence of other laws of nature we know by testimony and our own observation of the regularity of their effects. The existence of this law is made known to us not only by these means, but also by the still clearer and more conclusive evidence of every man's own consciousness.

Thus then do miracles force themselves upon our assent in every possible view which we can take of this interesting subject. If the testimony of the first preachers of the Gospel was true, the miracles recorded in the New Testament were certainly performed, and the doctrines of our religion were derived from heaven. On the other hand, if that testimony was false, either God must have miraculously effaced from the minds of those by whom it was given, all the associations formed between their ideas of sensation and the words of language, or he must have endowed those men with the gift of prescience, and at the same time have compelled them to fabricate a pretended revelation for the purpose of deceiving the world, and involving themselves and their immediate followers in certain and foreseen destruction.

The power necessary to perform the one series of these miracles is just as great as that which would be requisite to the performance of the other, because they are equally deviations from the laws of nature ; and considered merely as exertions of preternatural power, they may seem to balance each other, and to hold the mind in a state of suspense. But when we take into consideration the very different *purposes* for which those opposite and contending miracles were wrought, and call to mind that the *regular course of events* which we say proceeds according to the *laws of nature*, and every *deviation* from that course which we denominate *miraculous*, are alike produced by that all-perfect Being, who, when he established the laws of nature, provided for every circumstance which we call contingent, the balance is instantly destroyed, and the mind relieved from the painful state of suspense. The miracles recorded in the Gospels, if real, were wrought in support of a revelation, which, in the opinion of all by whom it is received, has brought to light many important truths, which could not otherwise have been made known to men ; and which, by the confession of those by whom it is rejected, contains the purest moral precepts, by which the conduct of mankind has ever been regulated. The opposite series of miracles, if real, was performed to enable and even to compel a company of Jews of the lowest rank and of the narrowest education, to fabricate, with the view of certain destruction to themselves, a consistent scheme of falsehood, and by an appeal to pretended miracles to impose it upon the world as a revelation from heaven. The object of the former series of miracles is worthy of a God of

infinite wisdom, goodness, and power. The object of the latter is absolutely inconsistent with wisdom and goodness, which are demonstrably attributes of that Being by whom alone miracles can be performed. Hence it follows, that the supposition of the apostles bearing *false* testimony to the miracles of their Master, implies a series of deviations from the laws of nature infinitely less probable in themselves than those miracles; and therefore by the maxim of Hume and his disciples, we must reject the supposition of falsehood in the testimony, and admit the reality of the miracles.

From Matth.
xii. 1. Mark ii.
23. Luke vi. 1.
John v. 1. to
Matth. xvii. 14.
Mark ix. 14.
Luke ix. 37.
John vii. 1.

It has been supposed however, that complete as the evidence certainly was which was furnished by the testimony of those who were eye-witnesses of our Lord's miracles, it has been greatly diminished to us by passing through so many generations. This theory of the diminution of evidence by transmission from hand to hand, was first framed, I believe, by a Scotchman *; but it appears to have been adopted by Laplace, who thus reasons in its support.

"Suppose a fact to be transmitted through twenty persons—the first communicating it to the second, and the second to the third, &c, and let the probability of each testimony be expressed by $\frac{9}{10}$, (that is, suppose that of ten reports made by each witness, nine only are true), then at every time the story passes from one witness to another, the evidence is reduced to nine-tenths of what it was before; so that after it has passed through the whole twenty, the evidence will be found to be less than one eighth of what it was originally." To illustrate his meaning, he compares the diminution of evidence by this sort of transmission to "the extinction of light by the interposition of several pieces of glass; a small number of pieces being sufficient to render an object entirely invisible, which a single piece allowed to be seen very distinctly."

This reasoning is not without force when applied to evidence transmitted from age to age by *mere oral tradition*; but it seems not to be at all applicable to evidence originally recorded in a book, and transmitted by means of that book from generation to generation. In a series of oral traditions the original evidence is lost as soon as the persons die by whom it was given; and we should have known nothing of it at all but from the report of others, who probably did not make use of the very words employed by the original witnesses, nor, however desirous they may really have been to speak the truth, relate the several circumstances of the event in the very same order. In this case, therefore, the original evidence will very soon become like the object gradually obscured by the successive interposition of several pieces of glass; but the case of evidence preserved in a *record* is very different, for it can never be either lost or obscured as long as the record remains, and its language is intelligible. Accordingly the very ingenious critic, who appears to me to suffer his own judgment to be occasionally biassed by the authority of Hume, completely refutes this reasoning of Laplace. "Take any ancient event, says he, that is well attested, such for example as the retreat of the *Ten Thousand*, and we are persuaded it will be generally admitted that the certainty of that event having taken place is as great at this moment as it was on the return of the Greek army, or immediately after Xenophon had published his narrative, The calculation of chances may indeed be brought to declare in favour of it; for Xenophon's narrative remains, and the probability will be found to be very small, that any considerable interpolation or change in that narrative could have taken place without some historical document remaining to inform us of such a change. The combination of chances necessary to produce and to conceal such an interpolation is in the highest degree improbable; and the authority of Xenophon remains on that account the same at this moment that it was originally."

* One *Craig*, who, in 1699, published in London a work entitled *Theologiæ Christianæ Principia Mathematica*, 4to. I know nothing either of the author, or of

his work, except what I have learned from Warburton, who mentions both in terms sufficiently contemptuous, though probably very just.

A. M. 4035,
&c. or 5441.
Ann. Dom.
Vuln. Fr. 31.
&c. or 30.

This is sound reasoning, but it applies with ten-fold force to the evidence, afforded by the Gospels, of our Lord's doctrines and miracles. These were witnessed equally by friends and enemies; they were recorded by four different authors—all eye-witnesses *, in the very age in which the doctrines were taught, and the miracles performed; these records were at an early period translated into all the languages of the Roman empire; they were deemed sacred by every man who adopted the Christian religion, and appealed to as containing all the principles of that religion; the Christians soon began to explain some parts of them very differently from each other, but all admitted the public *facts*, whether natural or miraculous, mentioned in these narratives; almost every important passage in them has been quoted by successive writers ever since the commencement of the Christian era (a); even Jews and heathens, who abhorred the Christian name, have occasionally quoted them; and all the *versions* and *quotations* have been in perfect harmony with the original records, which are still extant in some very ancient manuscripts. The ignorance or carelessness of transcribers has indeed introduced many various readings of single words and phrases, which have been all collated with wonderful accuracy by *Mill*, *Wetstein*, *Griesbach*, *De Rossi*, *Matthei*, and others, and all found to be of no vital importance. Some of the ancient heretics rejected Gospels, and parts of Gospels; but what they rejected was not the *facts* recorded in those Gospels, but doctrines which could not be reconciled to notions which they had brought into the church from the schools of Greek philosophy, or from the more wild and fantastic philosophy of the East; and their attempts at mutilation of the four Gospels were loudly condemned, as well by all the other heretical sects, as by the unanimous voice of the catholic church. In this state of things it is impossible that any considerable interpolation or change could have taken place in any of the four Gospels, without many documents remaining to inform us of such a change; and I am sure that the ingenious reviewer of Laplace—adverse as he seems to be to the admission of the smallest deviation, on any account from the known laws of nature—will agree with me, that “the combination of the chances necessary to produce and to conceal such an interpolation in the Gospels, is ten thousand times more improbable, than in the case of the narrative of Xenophon.” That narrative was long known to the Greeks alone, and could never be very interesting to any other people. The Gospels were soon spread over the whole civilized world, and must have been in the highest degree interesting, not only to all who named with reverence the name of Christ, but even to all who blasphemed that name, and who must therefore have been on the watch to detect the slightest change made by each other in these important writings. On this account, I am not without hopes that the same ingenious critic will admit, that for the reality of the Gospel miracles, we have at this day evidence as convincing to the reflecting mind, as those had who were contemporary with Christ and his apostles.]

* It is not certain that St Mark was a personal attendant on our Saviour, but it is very certain that he received the substance of his Gospel from St Peter, who was. See the *Appendix to the preceding Disser-*

tation on the four Gospels.

(a) See *Lardner's Credibility of the Gospel History*, and *Paley's Evidences of the Christian Religion*.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM OUR LORD'S LAST ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM TO HIS ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN, CONTAINING THE TERM OF SIX WEEKS AND FIVE DAYS.

THE HISTORY.

M. 4037.
or 5442.
nn. Dom.
g. Ær. 33,
cc. or 31.

UPON our Lord's entry into Jerusalem with such a vast retinue of people, the citizens were alarmed, and began to enquire, who this great person was? To which the multitude that accompanied him answered aloud, that it was Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth, a town in Galilee. Having therefore permitted his kingdom and Divine authority to be thus proclaimed by others, he proceeded, in the next place, to exert it himself: For, going to the temple, and there looking about him, he found the court of the Gentiles notoriously profaned and dishonoured by trading and merchandize. That therefore he might end, as he had begun his ministry, with the reformation of the house of God, he drove out all the buyers and sellers (as he did three years before) from the sacred ground; he overthrew the tables of the money-changers, † and the stalls of those

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

† These money-changers were not unlike our merchants or bankers, who deal in bills of exchange, and either remit money to foreign parts, or answer such draughts as, by their correspondents abroad, are made upon them: And, considering that the Jews (how far soever they lived from it) were obliged to repair to Jerusalem, there to offer their sacrifices, and pay their half shekel, for the use of the temple, Exod. xxx. 13. The institution of such dealers in money was highly necessary, that the Jews, in their several dispersions, who were to come up to Jerusalem to worship, paying their money to merchants at home, might have it, to answer their occasions, safe from thieves, and from the trouble of carriage, when they arrived at Jerusalem. Whether therefore the business of these money-changers was only to return money from distant parts, or to change foreign money into current coin, or larger money into less pieces, or perhaps to do all this, there was certainly nothing blame-worthy in the profession, had it not been for some intervening abuse. In like manner, it may be said of those who bought or sold cattle for sacrifices; since it would have been highly inconvenient for

every worshipper, who lived at a considerable distance, to bring them up with him, such men were necessary in their way; as were likewise the sellers of doves, because every Israelite did not keep this kind of birds, and yet no one creature was so often required in sacrifice as they. Our Saviour therefore, in this transaction, must not be thought to blame all such traffic in general, but only to find fault with the people for having taken up an improper place for the exercise of their respective callings: And therefore, to let them know that it was not out of passion, or any peevish resentment against them, but purely in obedience to a Divine command, that he made this reformation, he told them that it was written, "My house shall be called an house of prayer." This is the character which the prophet Isaiah gives of it, chap. lvi. 7.; and if it be an house appointed for prayer, and other religious offices, then is it no proper place for "the tables of money-changers, and the seats of those that sell doves," who have the markets of Jerusalem, and their own shops and houses to trade in. *Hammond's* and *Whitby's* Annotations, and *Surenhusii* Conciliationes in loca V. T. apud Matthæum.

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&c. or 5442.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Ær. 33.
&c or 31.

that sold doves; telling them, that they had made the temple, which was deservedly called an "house of prayer, a den of thieves †." [It is worthy of notice, that on this occasion he speaks in a tone of higher authority than on the former. (a) He then called the temple *His Father's* house, but he now calls it *His own*, saying, "My house is the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves."] And to let the people see, that he had both commission and authority to act as he did, he cured, in that instant, many blind and lame persons that were brought to him into the temple.

The people indeed were filled with admiration at the sight of these things; but the chief priests and scribes, when they saw the miracles which he wrought, and heard the acclamations of the children, who cried out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" were greatly enraged, and discovered their anger by asking him, "If he heard what they said?" But he silenced their question by shewing them, that what was so displeasing to them did really fulfil the Scriptures, particularly that passage in the Psalmist, where it is said, that †² "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." This answer, however, did but enrage them the more, and put them upon seeking all occasions to destroy him, though their dread of the people, who heard him with the greatest eagerness and attention, was some check upon their malice.

The Jews were not the only persons who came up to Jerusalem at the passover; for many devout Greeks †³ used likewise to resort thither at that feast; and some of these

† This expression is thought by some to be an allusion to those gangs of robbers which at this time infested Judea, and used to hide themselves in holes and dens of the mountains, as appears from the history of Josephus in several places: But our Lord here plainly refers to that passage in Jeremiah, where the prophet introduces God complaining, "Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the Lord," chap. vii. xi. But how could the house of God become a den of robbers? How could such violence be committed in so sacred a place? St Jerome, in his Commentary upon Matth. xxi. 12, 13. ascribes all this to the avarice of the priests, and gives us a lively description of the several artifices whereby they endeavoured to extort money. "In the temple of Jerusalem, says he, the finest and most spacious of any in the whole world, whither Jews assembled almost from all countries, sacrifices of different kinds, some for the rich and others for the poorer sort, were prescribed by the law; but because those who came from afar often wanted such sacrifices, the priests took the advantage to buy up all those beasts which were appointed for this purpose, and having sold them to those that wanted, received them at their hands back again. Because some who came to worship were so very poor, that they had not money enough to purchase so much as the lesser sacrifices, which were birds; to remedy this inconveniency, the priests set up bankers in one of the courts of the temple to lend them money upon security: But finding that they could not do this without transgressing the law which forbade usury, they had recourse to another device, which was to appoint a kind of pawn-brokers instead of bankers, i. e. men who, for the advance of a small sum, took fruits, herbs, and other consumables, instead of use-money. Our Lord therefore having observed this way of traffic, which the priests had set up in his Father's house, not only expelled their

agents, but arraigned them likewise for a pack of thieves; for he is a robber, says the father, who makes lucre of religion, and whose worship is, not so much the veneration he has for God, as the opportunity of making his own interest and advantage." *Beausobre's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

(a) *Horsley's* Sermons, vol. iii. p. 48.

†² These words are cited from Psalm viii. 2. and seem to vary a little from the original, which is thus rendered—"Out of the mouth of the very babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength." But when it is considered, that the only strength which can proceed from the mouth of children must be praise, or words put into their mouths to celebrate the praises of the Messiah, the phrase in the Psalmist and in the evangelist must needs mean the same thing; and our Saviour, in the application of it to the chief priests and scribes, seems to insinuate, "That these acclamations of the children were not fortuitous, but by a Divine instinct, and for the fulfilling of an ancient prophecy; and that therefore their declaring him to be the Messiah, or the Son of David, should be looked upon as a kind of call from heaven, to inform and instruct others in what they were to do." *Beausobre's* Annotations, and *Surenhusii* Conciliat. *ibid.*

†³ Who these Grecians were, the best of our commentators are not agreed. Some are of opinion, that they were mere Gentiles, who, either out of curiosity, viz. to see the magnificence of the temple, the solemnities of the feast, or the person of Jesus, of whose fame they had heard so much, or perhaps out of a principle of devotion, and to worship the God of Israel, might at this time resort to Jerusalem: For the Pagan religion, which admitted a plurality of gods, restrained none from worshipping the gods of other nations, so long as they were not thereby tempted to abandon those of their own. Others imagine that they were real Jews, who, being scattered in Grecian provinces after the conquests which Alexander the

being desirous to have a sight of Christ, addressed themselves † to Philip, one of the apostles, and he, by the assistance of Andrew, had them introduced. Our Lord was at that time discoursing to the disciples of many things relating to his passion, and particularly of the efficacy of his death, and what a powerful means it would prove to convert the world to his religion, more powerful indeed than his life could possibly be, even as corn, though it dies in the ground, †² when sown, rises again with a vast abundance and increase. While he was thus discoursing of his death, he seemed on a sudden to be seized with a natural horror †³ of its approaching hour, and was going to request of God a reprieve from it; but then recollecting, that for this purpose it was that he came into the world, he changed his petition, and, with a resolved acquiescence in his good pleasure, desired of him, in what method he should think most proper, to glorify his name; whereupon he was answered by a voice from heaven, †⁴ which some of the company took for a clap of thunder, and others for an angel's speaking to him, "that he had already glorified it, †⁵ and would glorify it again."

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xii. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

This voice he told them was not so much for his information in the will of heaven, as it was for their conviction of his Divine mission; and so he went on discoursing to them of his death, and the beneficial effects of it, until some of them, perceiving in what he said an inconsistency (as they thought) with some passages of Scripture, told him, that they could not rightly comprehend what he meant by his death, since some prophecies †⁶ had assured them that the "Messiah was to live for ever." But to this

Great and his successors made upon the Jews, still continued in these countries, but kept so close to their ancient religion, as to come in great numbers to Jerusalem upon the return of every passover. These were generally called Hellenists: And that there was great plenty of them in several provinces of Asia, is manifest from St Peter's address of his first epistle to the strangers (as he calls them) who were scattered through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia Minor, and Bithynia, 1 Pet. i. 1.; but the most general opinion is, that these Greeks were proselytes of the gate, who worshipped the God of heaven and earth, lived among the Jews, and conformed to their political laws, but would not engage in circumcision, or the observance of their ceremonies; and they came to Jerusalem at this time, not because they were permitted to celebrate the feast along with the Jews, but because they were indulged the privilege to behold their solemnities, and to pay their adorations to the Creator of the universe (even while the Jews were in the height of their public worship) in the court of the Gentiles, as appears from the case of the eunuch of queen Candace, Acts viii. 27. *Basnage's History of the Jews*, lib. v. c. 6. *Calmet's Commentary*, *Pool's* and *Hammond's* Annotations.

† These Greeks, says Grotius, seem to have been Syro-Phœnicians, who dwelt perhaps about Tyre and Sidon, and so might easily be acquainted with the Galileans, with whom they had commerce, and with Philip of Bethsaida, to whom they made application for access to Christ.

†² Our Saviour's words upon this occasion are not amiss paraphrased in this manner,—“Look, as you see in your ordinary husbandry the grains of wheat are first buried in the earth, and lose their form, before they spring and shoot up again, and bring forth fruit; so it must be with me. I must be first lifted up, before I shall draw men after me; I must first be

crucified, before my Gospel shall be preached to all nations, and the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in: But when I am once dead, and have risen, then shall ye see this abundant fruit.” *Pool's* Annotations.

†³ That men might not have it to say, that our Blessed Saviour, in point of suffering, was no proper example for our imitation, because he had no dread of death, or sense of pain, to make sufferings distasteful to him, whereas we are most tenderly affected with these things, he herein shews us, that he had the same natural concern for life, and dread of death, that we have, only that he over-ruled them by a desire of promoting his Father's glory. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†⁴ The only way of revelation which the Jews, since the Babylonish captivity and extinction of their prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, pretend to, is that of *Bath Koll*, or the *daughter of a voice*, so called, because it has some resemblance (though, as to its distinctness, but an imperfect one) of that voice which was uttered from the holy of holies, when the Lord spake to Moses, and, according to them, it is the will of God revealed in thunder from heaven; and therefore, though upon this occasion some of the company thought it thundered, and others, that an angel spake, yet neither of them were mistaken, because in this Bath-Koll there was always thunder joined with an articulate voice. *Hammond's* Annotations.

†⁵ “I have glorified it,” by causing my glory to be published and proclaimed in the world by thy preaching, and by the miracles which I have given in testimony of thy mission; “And I will glorify it again,” by thy resurrection and exaltation to the right hand of glory, by the mission of the Holy Ghost upon thy apostles, and by their carrying the “sound of the Gospel even unto the ends of the earth.” *Pool's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†⁶ The prophecies from whence the Jews may be supposed to have drawn this conclusion are,—2 Sam.

A. M. 4037.
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&c. or 31,

objection he made no other reply, than that it well behoved them to make good use of his instructions for the short time they were to have them; and so he withdrew from them, as well perceiving, that neither his Divine discourses, nor miraculous cures, could gain the faith of any, except the populace; for though some of their rulers might believe in him, yet such was their timidity, that they durst not declare it openly, for fear of excommunication, and because "they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

Towards the evening, however, he returned again to the temple, † and exhorted the people to believe in him, as a messenger sent from God to offer salvation to mankind; and, in case that they persisted in their infidelity, he threatened them with Divine vengeance in the last day, when the very Gospel, which he then preached to them, would rise up in judgment against them, and condemn them; and, with these words, he left the temple, and taking his apostles with him, returned to Bethany, where he lodged that night.

The next morning as he returned to Jerusalem, finding himself a little hungry, he went to a fig-tree, that was in the way, in hopes of finding some fruit upon it: But when he found none, to signify his Almighty power, he cursed the tree, and so proceeding to the temple, began again to clear it of all the traders that were got again into it; and there continued all the day long, teaching and instructing the people. While he was doing this, the chief priests, scribes, and rulers of the people, knowing that he had no commission from the Sanhedrim ‡², came and demanded of him by what authority he proceeded in that manner; but instead of answering their question directly, he put another to them, viz. Whether the baptism of John was of Divine, or only of human institution? To say that it was of Divine institution, would be to accuse themselves of impiety and incredulity; and to say that it was purely human, would be to provoke the people (who all looked upon him as a prophet) to stone them; and therefore, in this dilemma, they concluded that ignorance would be the best answer, and thereupon declared that they could not tell; to which our Saviour rejoined, "Neither is it necessary for me to give you an account of my commission and authority, since you seem to grant, that a man may lawfully preach and baptize and entertain disciples as John did, without the appointment and permission of the Sanhedrim." And so he proceeded in

vii. 16. where God, by the mouth of Nathan, promises David, "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever;" in much the same words, wherein he had sworn unto David himself, Psal. lxxxix. 29. "His seed will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven." To the same purpose they found the prophet Isaiah promising, chap. ix. 7. "My servant David shall be their king for ever, and of his government there shall be no end:" But what seemed to express the matter in the clearest terms was this passage in Daniel, chap. vii. 13, 14. And "behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, &c. and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, &c. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Thus the Jews wrongfully applied to the person of the Messiah the things which related to his kingdom; but then they gave little or no heed to what the same prophets said of the body, wherein the Messiah was to suffer, and of his hands and feet, which were to be pierced, Psalm xxii. 16.—xl. 6. of "his giving up

his life a sacrifice for sin," Isaiah liii. 12. and of his being "cut off, but not for himself," Dan. ix. 26. all which was not incompatible with his abiding for ever; seeing that, after his sufferings, he was to rise again, Psalm xli. 10. and enter into glory, 1 Peter i. 11. So that, by comparing these things together, they might have easily removed this scruple, especially when he had told them so often, and they so well remembered that he had told them, that "after three days he would rise again." *Whitby's and Beausobre's Annotations.*

† It is very probable that the priests, who had the advantage of letting these shops, and were therefore not so well pleased with the reformation which our Saviour had made, ordered the traders to reassume their places, promising to know of him by what authority he made those innovations. *Calmet's Commentary.*

‡² It is pretended by some, that the person who preached in the temple was to have a licence from the Sanhedrim, but that any might speak publicly in the synagogues without any such faculty, because we find our Saviour preaching in the latter almost every Sabbath-day, without any molestation. However

several parables, (such as the parable (a) of the two sons †, that (b) of the wicked husbandmen †², and that (c) of the guest †³ invited to the marriage feast) to upbraid them with their hypocrisy, cruelty, and contempt of religion; and for these to denounce the severe judgments of God against them.

The Pharisees, who had as great a share in the application of these parables as any other, went away much enraged, and with a firm resolution to find out some occasion against him. To this purpose, therefore, they sent some of their disciples, together with the Herodians †⁴, to propound this insidious question to him, "Whether it was

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 43. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

this be, it was certainly a vain question for the chief priests and rulers to ask our Lord, "by whose authority he did those things?" after they had seen his miracles, and knew that he claimed his commission from God. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*.

(a) Matth. xxi. 28.

† By the *Man* in the parable is signified *God*, and by his *two sons*, the *Jews* and the *Gentiles*. The *Jews* are the second son: They promised to God a perfect obedience, and yet did nothing: The *Gentiles* are the other son, who at first refused to obey, and gave themselves up to idolatry, and all manner of wickedness, but, upon the preaching of the Gospel, repented; and after their conversion applied themselves in earnest to do the will of God. The parable, according to our Lord's own interpretation of it, Matth. xxi. 32. is applicable likewise to two kinds of *Jews*,—the scribes and Pharisees, who pretended to so much religion, and such mighty zeal for the performance of the law, when in reality they observed none of its weightier precepts; and the publicans and sinners, who, though at first they lived in practices quite abhorrent to the precepts of religion, yet, upon the preaching of John the Baptist, were several of them converted, and, attending to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, in process of time became obedient to their heavenly Father's will, verse 31. *Calmet's Commentary*.

(b) Matth. xxi. 33.

†² For the explication of this parable we must observe,—That the householder here, Matth. xxi. 33. is Almighty God, and the vineyard is the Jewish people, considered in their spiritual capacity; that his "planting and hedging it about," signifies his peculiar favour and Providence in communicating to them his will, and, by laws and ordinances peculiar to themselves, distinguishing them from all other nations to be his own people; that the wine-press, and tower, and other suitable conveniences, denote the temple and altar which he built among them, together with all those advantages and opportunities of serving him acceptably, which he afforded them; that the husbandmen to whom this vineyard was let out, were the priests and Levites, the doctors and rulers of that church and people, who are here represented as wanting in their duty, and negligent in cultivating the vineyard, or instructing the people committed to their charge; that the fruits are no other than returns of duty, proportioned to the advantages of knowing and performing it; that the servants sent to demand the fruits, were the prophets whom God from

time to time commissioned to reprove, exhort, and quicken to their duty, both priests and people, by denunciations of vengeance and promises of reward; that the Son, whom he sent at last, was our Blessed Saviour, whom the Jewish priests and rulers treated in no better manner than they had done the prophets of old, but, instead of reverencing him as the Son of God, and as he proved himself to be by divers manifestations of Divine power, put him to a cruel and ignominious death; and therefore well might the Lord of the vineyard "destroy these wicked men, &c." as we find from the Jewish historian Josephus, as well as other writers, that God, for their great impiety, brought the Roman armies upon that nation, and by them burnt their city and temple, destroyed and dispersed the people, and carried his Gospel to the Gentiles, "to other husbandmen who should render him the fruits in their seasons," ver. 43. *Calmet's Commentary*, *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

(c) Matth. xxii. 2.

†³ The king in this parable represents God the Father; the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is frequently described as the Spouse of his church; and the marriage-feast, the dispensation of the Gospel. The guests that were first invited to the feast were the Jews; the servants sent forth to call them were the prophets, John the Baptist, and the apostles; upon their refusal, the other guests brought in to supply their room were the Gentiles; and the person who wanted the wedding-garment, is an emblem of all those who profess and receive, but do not live up to the principles of Christ's religion, [or rather, who trust in their own righteousness, and hope to be saved without faith in Christ as the Redeemer of the world.] *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii.

†⁴ The Herodians are commonly, and most probably supposed to signify the partisans and favourers of Herod; but what their principle was, as to the other matter now in hand, is not so generally agreed. Some think them enemies to the Roman government, and that they only watched a favourable opportunity to make Herod's family absolute. Others think them entirely in the interest of the emperor, as Herod himself then was; for having, by his indulgence, been advanced to the regal state, he acted for, and under him, in collecting the customs and public dues. This opinion seems the more probable, because it is more agreeable to the Pharisees present design: For, had they sent persons all of one sentiment, Christ might have easily satisfied them all; but now, by

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lawful for them to pay tribute to Cæsar or not†?" never doubting but that, which way soever he answered, his business was done: If in the affirmative, the multitude would detest him as a betrayer of their ancient liberties; if in the negative, the Herodians would then accuse him as a rebel against the emperor Tiberius: But he knowing their treacherous design, demanded a sight of the tribute money; and when they acknowledged that the signature †² on it was Cæsar's, he sent them away quite confounded with this answer, †³ "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

sending men of different judgments, they made it impossible for him to content both parties, since, in determining for the payment of the tribute, he must have given offence to the Pharisees, and, in effect, renounced those liberties and privileges which some of the Jewish doctors insisted upon; and, in pronouncing against it, he was sure to incur the Herodians displeasure, and make himself obnoxious to the jurisdiction of the civil sword. The Herodians therefore may well be presumed to have been persons of a principle different to that of the Pharisees, whose address and cunning upon this occasion seems to have lain chiefly in the management of the messengers. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

† The state of the question truly taken seems to be this,—The government of the Jews had fallen into the hands of the Maccabees, and, in succession to one of them, named Alexander. He had two sons, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, the younger of which made war upon the elder, and assumed to himself the government. Hyrcanus, and his party, being not able to resist him, called in the assistance of the Romans. Pompey, at their request, besieges Jerusalem, and had the gates surrendered to him by a faction within that favoured Hyrcanus; but Aristobulus, and his adherents, fought it out, till at last they were vanquished and overpowered. The Romans put Hyrcanus in possession of the government; but, at the same time, obliged him to hold it by their favour and permission, which laid the foundation of great and lasting dissensions among the Jews; some submitting to the Roman power, as thinking they had a fair title both by conquest and surrender; while others objected, that the surrender was made by a party only, and not the whole body of the people; that it was not conquest, but treachery, which brought Jerusalem to their mercy; and, consequently, that they were usurpers, and Hyrcanus and his followers betrayers of their country. That which contributed not a little to make this controversy still greater, was what Josephus and Eusebius relate concerning Judas the Gaulonite. He, about the time of the taxation, in which (as St Luke says) our Saviour was born, disquieted the minds of many, and represented the decree of Augustus for that purpose, as a mark of infamy and servitude not to be borne. This man is said to have instituted a particular sect, one of whose tenets was,—That no Jew ought to pay tribute, or to acknowledge any sovereign lord, but God only; and that they were his peculiar people, and therefore bound to maintain their liberty, especially against profane and uncircumcised pretenders, such as the

Roman emperors were. So that the paying of tribute to Cæsar was not at this time a question of mere curiosity, but a matter of moment with regard to practice; nor was it a point of bravery only in the esteem of the Pharisees, and others of that party, but a scruple of conscience, and a debate of religion, whether this tribute should be paid or not. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

†² Every one knows that the Roman emperors were wont to disperse their money through all the provinces belonging to their jurisdiction; that this money was stamped with the image or bust of the emperor on one side, and on the reverse, with some figure or other, representing victory, plenty, peace, or the like; and that this tribute, or capitation tax, (which, according to Ulpian, the males from fourteen, and the females from twelve years old, were obliged to pay) was usually collected in this money, and no other, as the only current coin at Rome. *Calmet's Commentary*.

†³ Some interpreters are of opinion, that our Saviour's words do not determine Cæsar's right to demand tribute: But since the Jews had now submitted to the Roman government, (as they had formerly done to the Assyrian) which national submission (with promise of fidelity) having now obtained about an hundred years, was a just ground for Cæsar's right; since, besides this, Cæsar had indulged them in the exercise of their religion, and the enjoyment of their civil rights; had fought their battles, and protected them against the common enemy, the Arabians and Parthians, and the like; since, more especially, it was a received maxim among the Jews, that wherever the money of any person was owned as the current coin of the kingdom, there the inhabitants acknowledged that person to be their lord and governor; and since the Jews accepted and trafficked with Cæsar's money, and held it current in all their payments, our Saviour's answer, "Render therefore unto Cæsar," which is founded upon their own principles, must needs be deemed a positive declaration of Cæsar's right to receive tribute, and such other acknowledgments as belonged to the state and dignity of the post wherein Providence had placed him. It might indeed be objected (says Grotius on Matth. xxii. 20.) that the Romans ruled over the Jews, and Cæsar over the Romans, in fact only, and without any right to do so; but Christ shews that this objection signifies nothing to the matter in hand: For since peace cannot be secured without forces, nor forces had without pay, nor pay without taxes or tribute, it follows that tribute ought to be paid to the person actually governing (so

Upon the defeat given to these two parties, the Sadducees came to him with a question, and a difficulty that they thought insurmountable. For as they had no belief of a resurrection, they put a case to him of one woman, who, according to the direction of their law, had been married to seven brothers successively, and thereupon desire to know whose wife she was to be at the general resurrection †? In answer to which, our Lord gave them to understand, that though marriage was necessary in this state, in order to raise up a posterity to mortal man, yet that, after the resurrection, men would be immortal and live like angels, devoid of passions, and incapable of decay; and then proved the reality of the resurrection †² from one of God's appellations, in a book which themselves allowed to be canonical.

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

The Pharisees, hearing that the Sadducees were silenced, began to rally again; and one of their doctors ||, in hopes to ensnare our Saviour, in case he should prefer one part

long as he continues to govern) in consideration of the common safety and protection which are secured by the present possessor of the government, whoever that possessor be. *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

† The discourse of the Sadducees was founded upon this mistake,—That if there would be a resurrection of bodies, there would necessarily follow a revival of the same relations likewise, and that the state of the world to come would be like the state of this present world, in which, for the propagation and continuance of mankind, men and women marry and are given in marriage; which gross notion of theirs our Saviour endeavours to rectify. *Pool's Annotations*.

[The notion did not originate among the Sadducees, who admitted of no resurrection of the dead, but among the Pharisees, whose notions of the happiness of the blessed were very gross. They supposed that they were to eat and drink, to marry and to be given in marriage; and they even condescended on the food which they were chiefly to use in their feasts—food, which by us would not be thought a delicacy. Of the future state of the wicked, they were extremely doubtful. “De impiorum exitu res erat, ut et hodie est, planè incerta: Alii resurrecturos credebant, aliis contradicentibus. Quod ad piorum felicitatem attinet, credebant multi eam fore diuturnam quidem, ad non æternam. Deinde felicitatem illam crassam, terrenam, atque ex bonorum corpori servitium affluentia conflata somniant. Quemadmodum enim nunc dierum Thalmudistæ epulas sibi fingunt, in quibus Behemothum et Leviathanem et Bariuchne, bovem, piscem, avem sint esitaturi; (de qua fabula vide Buxtorfium cum Judæis bellè ludentem) ita Christi, quoque tempore Judæi vitam quidem post hanc felicem, sed huic nostræ similem, animo conceperant.—— Hinc nata erat captiosa ista Sadducæorum interrogatio Christo proposita, de muliere, quæ septem fratres successive maritos habuit, cuinam istorum post resurrectionem denuo reddenda esset. Nimirum Sadducæi, Pharisæorum antagonistæ, a Christo credebant doceri resurrectionem ex iisdem hypothesibus, quibus nitebantur Pharisei. Ii autem inter alias corporis voluptates, etiam conjugii usum in futura vita mansurum existimarunt.”] *Bulli Oper.* Anno 1703, *Harm. Apost. Dissert. Poster.* cap. x. § 15.

† The words which our Saviour produces in proof

of the resurrection, are those which God uses to Moses, “I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,” Exod. iii. 6. and the argument which is implied in them is this,—That since to be the God of any one is a federal expression, which denotes God to be a kind benefactor, who either doth or will do good to such persons as are in his favour and under his protection; since God is not the God of the dead, and can have no regard or consideration for such as are mere nonentities, or so dead as never to return to life again; and since in this life Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, received no such signal kindnesses from the Almighty, as answer the emphatical expression of his being “their God,” it must necessarily follow, that God, in declaring himself to be their God, did solemnly engage himself to make them happy after this life, according to what the author to the Hebrews observes, “wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city,” Heb. xi. 16. This way of arguing was of great force against the Sadducees, who denied the immortality of the soul, as well as the resurrection of the body; and at the same time, it fully proves the resurrection of the body: For since the souls of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were not the entire persons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which consisted of bodies as well as souls, it would from hence follow, that God could truly be their God, i. e. their rewarder and bounteous benefactor, no other way than by a resurrection of their bodies, to be reunited to their proper souls. *Pool's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations, and *Tillotson's* Sermons, vol. i.

|| The person whom we here render doctor, is by St Matthew, chap. xxii. 35. called a lawyer, and by St Luke, chap. xx. 39. a scribe; but in this diversity of words there is no difference of sense: For the scribes were of two sorts, or had at least two offices; the one was “to sit in the chair of Moses,” Matth. xxiii. 2. i. e. to read and interpret the law of Moses to the people; the other to expound to them the traditions which they pretended to have received from their forefathers. The name of scribe they seem to have derived from Ezra, (about 500 years before Christ), who is so frequently styled “a scribe of the law of the Lord, who read in the book of the law, and expounded it,” Ezra vii. 12. Neh. viii. 1. and xii. 36, &c. And because the traditions which they

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of the law above another, desired to know his opinion, † “which was to be accounted the greatest commandment of all?” Whereupon our Lord reduced the whole law to two general precepts of equal obligation to all mankind, “the love of God above all things, and the †² love of our neighbour as ourselves;” in the former of which we obey the first, and in the latter the second table of the law †³; and with this answer the doctor was well pleased. When our Saviour had thus resolved all their questions, he, in his turn, at last put this one to them, viz. In what sense the Messiah could be David’s Son, when (a) David himself, by Divine inspiration, “called him his Lord?” But to this they could give no answer, because they were ignorant that the Messiah, as God, was really the Lord of David, but as man, and descended from his family, he was his Son: And after these (disputes which were the last he had with them) he went again, in the evening, with his disciples to Bethany.

On the next morning, as our Lord was returning to Jerusalem the third time, the apostles, observing that the fig-tree which he had cursed the day before †¹ was withered away, and dead to the very root, took notice of it to him as a thing very strange and surprising; whereupon he exhorted them to have stedfast faith in God, fervency and perseverance in their prayers, and a †⁵ forgiving temper to those that had offend-

taught, and obliged the people to observe, were called νόμους, or *laws*, they thence had the appellation of νομικοί, or *lawyers*: And as some of the scribes were the persons appointed to copy out the Bible for such as had occasion for it, and to take care of the preservation of the purity of the text; so others employed themselves in taking the like pains about the traditions of the elders, and from thence, very likely, (though they were all of the same order of men) they might have different denominations. *Whitby’s Annotations*, and the Introduction to *Echard’s Ecclesiastical History*.

† This was no frivolous or impertinent question, but what at this time divided the greatest part of the learned among the Jews: some giving the preference to the observation of the Sabbath; others to the ordinance of circumcision; and others to the precept of sacrifices; never considering the great command recorded in Deut. vi. 5. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might;” or that other recorded in Leviticus xix. 18. “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,” until our Saviour reminded them of them. *Whitby’s Annotations*, and *Calmet’s Commentary*.

†² That by our neighbour here we are to understand every other person who is capable of kindness from us, or stands in need of our help, is evident from our Saviour’s determination in the case of the Jew and the good Samaritan; from the examples we are called upon to imitate in this affection, viz. the love of God and our Blessed Saviour; and from these evangelical precepts which extend this duty to all men: But by loving our neighbour as ourselves, it is not required, either that we should love him from the same inward principles which excite our affections to ourselves, or that we should love him to the same degree and proportion that we love ourselves; but only that we should make the affection which we bear to ourselves the rule we are to follow in expressing our love to him; or (in other words) that we

should love him in all the instances wherein we express our love to ourselves, though not in an equal measure. *Whitby’s Annotations*.

†³ The words in the text are,—“On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets,” Matth. xxii. 40. which are a metaphor taken from the custom mentioned by Tertullian, of hanging up their laws in a public place to be seen of all men; and import, that in them is contained all that the law and the prophets do require, in reference to our duty to God and man. For though there be some precepts of temperance which we owe to ourselves, yet are they such as we may be moved to perform from the true love of God and of our neighbour. For the love of God will preserve us from all impatience, discontent, and evil lustings. It will make us watchful over ourselves to keep a good conscience, as being solicitous for our eternal welfare: And the love of our neighbour will restrain us from all angry passions, such as envy, malice, and other perturbations which arise against him; so that these two commands may be very justly called an abridgment or compendium of the whole Scripture. *Whitby’s Annotations*, and *Calmet’s Commentary*.

(a) Psalm cx. 1.

†⁴ It is remarked of our Blessed Saviour’s miracles, that they were all works of mercy and beneficence; and that if any of them had a contrary tendency, they were always shewn upon brute and inanimate creatures, and that too, not without a charitable intent of conveying some symbolical instruction to the spectators, as this withering of the fig-tree was to represent to the Jewish nation their approaching doom. *Beausobre’s Annotations*.

†⁵ The command to forgive those that have offended us, before we pray, not only shews that no resentments of what our brother hath done should stick long upon our spirits, because they indispose us for that duty which we ought continually to be prepared for; but that there is likewise some kind of forgiveness to be exercised, even towards him that does not

ed them, in order to make their prayers accepted, and then they would not fail, in the course of their ministry, to perform as great or greater miracles † than this.

When our Lord was come into the temple, he began to teach the people as he had done the day before; and to raise an aversion in his disciples, and in all that heard him, to the principles and practices of the scribes and Pharisees, he took the freedom to expose their vices without reserve; their pride, their hypocrisy, their covetousness, their hard-heartedness to parents, impiety to God, and cruelty to his faithful servants; and, upon his mentioning this last particular, he broke out into the same pathetic exclamation against Jerusalem, for her murdering the prophets, and other messengers sent from God, that had been the matter of his frequent lamentations before.

Before he left the temple, he took notice how the people threw their money into the treasury †²; and among many, who offered very plentifully, observing a poor woman cast in her two mites, (which amount to no more than a farthing) he called his apostles, and assured them, that that poor widow had been more liberal than any of the rest, because their oblations proceeded from their superfluity, but she from her indigence had given all she had.

In the afternoon, as they were returning to Bethany, his apostles took a view of the several buildings of the temple, and were making their remarks of the largeness of its stones *, the richness of its ornaments *², and the beauty and stateliness of the whole; when our Saviour acquainted them, that how glorious soever it might appear at present, it would not be long before the whole structure should be so entirely ruined, that their should *³ “not so much as one stone be left upon another.”

ask it, nor shew any tokens of his repentance, viz. that we should not only free our minds from all desires of revenge, and so far forget the injury as not to upbraid him with it; but be inclined likewise to shew him kindness, and ready to do him any good turn: For what the law required of a Jew to do to his enemy's beast, Exod. xxiii. 4, 5. that, without all controversy, the Gospel requires of a Christian to do to his offending brother. *Whitby's Annotations.*

† It was a common saying among the Jews, when they were minded to commend any one of their doctors for his great dexterity in solving difficult questions, that “such an one was a rooter up of mountains;” and, in allusion to this adage, our Saviour tells his disciples, that “if they had faith, they might say to a mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and it should be done,” Matth. xxi. 21. i. e. that, in confirmation of the Christian faith, they should be able to do the most difficult things. For besides that our Saviour's words are not to be taken in a literal sense, they are likewise to be restrained to the age of miracles, and to the persons to whom they were spoken, viz. the apostles and first propagators of the Christian religion, because experience teaches us, that this is no ordinary and standing gift belonging to the church. *Whitby's Annotations.*

†² The first institution of this treasury we find in 2 Kings xii. 9. where it is said, that “Jehoiada the priest took a chest, and bored an hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right side, as one goeth into the house of the Lord, and the priests that kept the door put therein all the money that was brought into the house.” This money was, at that time, given for the reparation of the temple, and in

after-ages the money cast into the treasury, even in our Saviour's time, was designed, not only for the relief of the poor, but for sacred uses, and the adorning of the temple, which might occasion Josephus (in Bello Jud. lib. vi. c. 14.) to say that the temple was built, not only with the bounty of Herod, but with the money contained in the holy treasury likewise, and with the tributes which were sent from all parts of the world. *Whitby's Annotations.*

* Josephus, who gives us a description of the temple built by Herod, tells us, among other things, that the “whole fabric was made of durable white stone, some of which were five and twenty cubits long, eight in height, and twelve in breadth.” *Antiq. lib. xv. c. 14.*

*² These ornaments were the spoils which their kings had taken in war; the rich presents which foreign princes, upon certain occasions, had made; and the costly gifts which the Jews, from all parts of the world, used to send to the temple at Jerusalem. These were called *ἀναθήματα*, because they were hung against the walls and the pillars of the temple for the people to behold; and when Herod had rebuilt it, he not only replaced all the former ornaments, but added several other, especially the spoils which he took in his war with the Arabians, and a vine of massy gold, of prodigious weight and value, which was his own free gift. *Joseph. Antiq. and Calmet's Commentary.*

*³ This prophecy of our Blessed Saviour was, in a great measure, accomplished about forty years after, when (as several Jewish authors tell us) Taurus, i. e. Terentius Rufus, whom Titus left chief commander of the army in Judea, did with a plough-share tear up the foundations of the temple, and thereby signally

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xiv. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

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&c. or 5442.
Ann. Dom.
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&c. or 31.

The general notion was, that this temple was to last (a) even until the end of the world. And therefore, when our Saviour had seated himself upon mount Olivet, in full view and prospect of it, his apostles desired to know when this destruction would happen, and what would be the previous signs of it. The signs of it, he told them, would be the coming of many impostors, † and false Christs, the rumours of wars, * and famines, *² and pestilences, dreadful earthquakes, *³ prodigies, *⁴ and amazing sights in the air, the persecution *⁵ of Christians, and the propagation of the gospel all the world

fulfilled the words of the prophet, "Therefore shall Zion, for your sakes, be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountains of the Lord as the high places of the forest," Micah iii. 12. It can hardly be thought, however, but that, notwithstanding this demolishment, there might probably be left one stone upon another, and therefore something more was wanting towards the literal completion of our Saviour's prophecy, to which the emperor Julian in some measure contributed: For having given the Jews licence to rebuild their temple at Jerusalem, they took away every stone of the old foundation to help to build their new edifice; but heaven prevented their design; for flashes of lightning (as our best historians tell us) burst out from the foundation they had dug, and so blasted and terrified them, that they were forced to give over their enterprise, after they had pulled up and removed all the remains of the old temple. *Whitby's Annotations*, *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Warburton's Julian*, Vid. *Ammian Marcell.* lib. xxiii. *Socrat.* lib. iii. c. 2.

(a) 2 Chron. vi. 2.

† Never were there so many impostors of this kind as in the time a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xx. c. 6.) doubtless because this was the age wherein the Jews, from the prophecy of Daniel, were taught to expect their Messiah. *Beausobre's Annotations*.

* Besides the war which the Jews waged with the Syrians, not long before the destruction of their city, (Joseph. Antiq. lib. ii. c. 19.) the contests between Otho and Vitellius, and Vitellius and Vespasian, at Rome, were much about the same time, and the oppression of the governors of Judea, who minded nothing but to enrich themselves, had so irritated the minds of the people, that, for some time before their final calamity, we read of nothing but rebellions and revolts, parties and factions, and bands of robbers harassing and infesting the country. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Beausobre's Annotations*.

*² In the fourth year of Claudius (as Eusebius informs us) there happened a great famine, which oppressed all the Roman empire, but more especially Palestine, where many perished (according to Josephus) for lack of food, (Antiq. lib. 20. c. 3.) And the same historian informs us, that when one Niger was slain by the Jews, he imprecated famine and pestilence upon their cities, which God accordingly inflicted. *De Bello Jud.* lib. iv. c. 23.

*³ In the reigns of Claudius and Nero, there happened many earthquakes in Asia Minor, and the isles of the Archipelago, where the Jews inhabited, (Euseb. Chron. and Tacit. Annal. lib. ii.) and Josephus

acquaints us, that in the night, when the Idumæans encamped before Jerusalem, "there blew a dreadful tempest of wind and rain, accompanied with such terrible flashes of lightning, claps of thunder, and bellying of earthquakes, as put all the people to their wits end to think what these prodigies might portend." *De Bello Jud.* lib. 4. c. 7.

*⁴ In his preface to the history of the wars of the Jews, Josephus undertakes to record the miseries and calamities which befel that nation, and the signs and prodigies which preceded their ruin. To this purpose he tells us, that, for a whole year together, a comet, in the figure of a sword, hung over the city, and pointed, as it were, directly down upon it; that there were seen in the clouds armies in battle array, and chariots encompassing the country, and investing their cities; that, at the feast of the passover, in the middle of the night, a great light shone upon the temple and altar, as if it had been noon-day; that, at the same feast, the great gate of the temple made all of massy brass, and which twenty could hardly shut, opened of itself, though fastened with bolts and bars; that, at the feast of Pentecost soon after, when the priests went into the temple to officiate, they heard at first a kind of confused noise, and then a voice calling out earnestly, in articulate words, "Let us be gone, let us be gone;" and that these prodigies were really so, we have the testimony of Tacitus, a Roman historian of that age, who has thus recounted them,—"*Evenerunt prodigia, visæ per cælum concurrere acies, rutilantia arma, et subito nubium igne collucere templum: Expanse repente delubri fores: Et audita major humana vox, excedere Deos; simul ingens motus excedentium.*" *Hist.* lib. v. and *Joseph. de Bello Jud.* lib. vii. c. 12.

*⁵ This part of our Saviour's prediction was literally fulfilled before the destruction of Jerusalem. As soon as Christianity began to spread, the Jews wrote letters to every part of the world against the professors of it, in order to raise persecutions against them. St Paul, before his conversion, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ," Acts ix. 1. "shut up many of them in prison, both men and women," Acts xxii. 4.—xxvi. 10. himself, when converted, and Silas were not only imprisoned, but beaten in the synagogue, Acts xvi. 22. as were likewise Peter and John, Acts v. 18. Stephen, the first martyr, was slain by the council, Acts vii. 59. James the Greater, by Herod, Acts xii. 1. and James the Less, by Ananus the high priest: Multitudes of Christians were persecuted to death by Saul. Acts xxii. 4. by the Jews, as Justin Martyr testifies, and by the emperor Nero, as Tacitus relates, *Annal.* lib. xv. For the professors of our most holy religion,

over *: But that they might escape the calamity which would suddenly come upon their country, and utterly destroy † the Jewish state and government, he advertised them, that whenever they should see the city of Jerusalem invested with armies, and the temple polluted with abominations, they might then conclude that this desolation *² was approaching, and that therefore it was high time for them to provide for their safety *³ by a quick retreat.

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

Of the precise time of its coming, however, no created being (as he told them) could

before the principles of it came to be enquired into, were looked upon as the common enemies of mankind, insomuch, that "whosoever killed them thought that he did God service," John xvi. 2. *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

* That before the dissolution of the Jewish state, the Christian religion had spread itself over all the parts of the then known world, we may reasonably conclude from the labours of St Paul, who alone carried the Gospel through Judea, Syria, Arabia, Greece, Macedonia, Achaia, Asia Minor, Italy, &c. And if the other apostles, whose travels we are not so well acquainted with, did the like, there is no doubt to be made, but that "their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world," Rom. x. 18. St Peter addresses his first Epistle to the elect that were in Pontus, Galatia, Capadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; and Clement, who was his contemporary, and immediate successor in the see of Rome, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, tells us, "that the nations beyond the ocean were governed by the precepts of the Lord." An event this! which he only could foretel, who, having having all power in heaven and earth, was able to effect it. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*.

† The words in the text are,—"Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken," Matth. xxiv. 29. that these words are not to be taken in a literal sense is plain, because that, after the sackage of Jerusalem by Vespasian's army, no such thing, as is here mentioned, happened to the sun, moon, or stars. The expressions therefore must be metaphorical, and do here denote, as they frequently do in the writings of the prophets and other authors, that entire destruction and utter desolation which is brought upon any nation. For in this language the prophet Isaiah speaks of the destruction of Babylon: "The day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it: For the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine," chap. xliii. 9. which, according to Maimonides, are proverbial expressions, "importing the destruction and utter ruin of a nation, and of such persons more especially, who, for their state and dignity, might be compared to the sun, moon, and stars," More Nevoch. lib. ii. and, accordingly, the sense of our Saviour's words must be,

—That, after the taking and destroying of Jerusalem, God's judgments would still pursue the people, so that those, who survived the ruin of their country, should be dispersed into different regions, sold for slaves, or reduced to a condition worse than slavery. And so the event proved: For those that were carried to Rome, served only to adorn the triumph of their conqueror: Those that fled to Antioch for shelter, were cruelly massacred there; Those that maintained the castle of Massada, rather than fall into the hands of the enemy agreed to slay one another: Those that escaped to Thebes and Alexandria, were brought back and tortured to death; and those of Cyrene, who joined a false prophet, named Jonathan, were all cut to pieces by the Roman general. All this happened immediately after the taking of Jerusalem; and, without any farther search into their history, is enough to verify our Saviour's expression, that "the sun was darkened and the moon gave no light" upon that wretched people. *Joseph. de Bello*, lib. vii. c. 24, &c.

*² The desolation which the Jews suffered in this last war with the Romans, was so vastly great, that all history can scarce furnish us with an example of the like nature. The number of the slain was eleven hundred thousand; the number of prisoners was ninety-seven thousand. Those that were above seventeen were sent into Egypt to work in the mines; those that were under that age, were sold for slaves into different countries; and a great number of others were distributed in the Roman provinces to be exposed to wild beasts on the theatre, and as gladiators, to kill one another, for the sport and diversion of the spectators: "Until the cities were wasted without inhabitants, and the houses without a man, and the land was utterly desolate, and the Lord had removed men far away, and there was a great forsaking in the midst of the land," as the prophet expresses it, Isaiah vi. 11, 12. *Joseph. de Bello Jud.* lib. vii. c. 17.

*³ Which accordingly they did: For when Cestius Gallus had besieged Jerusalem, and, without any visible cause, on a sudden raised the siege, the Christians that were in the city took this opportunity to make their escape to Pella in Paræa, a mountainous country, and to other places under the government of king Agrippa, where they found safety. Thus punctually were all the predictions of our Blessed Saviour fulfilled; so that whoever shall compare them (as Eusebius, in his *Eccl. Hist.* lib. iii. c. 7. expresses it) with the account of Josephus concerning the war of the Jews, cannot but admire the wisdom of Christ, and own his predictions to be Divine. *Hammond's* and *Whitby's Annotations*.

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certainly know; and therefore it was incumbent upon them to keep themselves in a state of perpetual watchfulness, in a faithful discharge of their respective duties, and in a constant perseverance in prayer to God; all which he endeavoured to enforce with several parables; such as that of the faithful servant, whom his master, at his return from a journey, found employed in his proper business, when he of a contrary character was surprised in his riot and debaucheries, and accordingly punished*; that of the wise and foolish virgins, who were differently prepared at the coming of the bridegroom**; and that of the talents entrusted with diligent and slothful servants†. And as this destruction of Jerusalem was no small emblem of the final consummation of all things, from hence he proceeds to describe†² the manner of his coming to the last and general judgment; when, surrounded with the refulgent rays of his majesty, and seated upon his bright throne of glory,†³ with all the holy angels of heaven attending him, he should

* The punishment inflicted on the evil servant is said to be cutting asunder, Matth. xxiv. 51. In the same manner as Samuel used Agag, 1 Sam. xv. 33. and David the Ammonites, 2 Sam. xii. 31. and Nebuchadnezzar threatened the blasphemers of the true God, Dan. iii. 29. This punishment was, in old times, inflicted on those that were false to their creditors, rebels to their prince, or betrayers of their country; nor was it in use only among the eastern people, but among the Romans, as we learn from Suetonius, in the life of Caius, and among the Greeks, as Homer, Sophocles, and Aristophanes informs us: And therefore this punishment, says our Saviour, will I inflict on those that are perfidious to their covenant in baptism, and enemies to my government. *Whitby's Annotations.*

** The better to understand the sense of this parable, we should do well to observe what the custom at marriages was, to which our Saviour seems to allude. When the bridegroom was to bring home his bride (which was generally the conclusive ceremony, and done in the night-time), the young women of the town, to which she was to come, in order to do her honour, went to meet her with lighted lamps: She too, according to her quality and condition, had her companions and servants attending her, and some of the most beautiful ladies of the place from whence she came going before her. Statius describes a marriage, whereat the nine muses appeared with their lamps.

Demigrant helicone deæ, quatiuntque novenâ
Lampide solemnem thalamis coëuntibus ignem.

SYLV. lib. i.

And most of our modern travellers inform us, that, among the eastern people, especially the Persians, this way of conducting the bride home, with lamps and lighted torches, still prevails. None need be told, that by the bridegroom we are to understand our Saviour Christ; by the bride, his church; by the virgins, Christians in general; and by the oil in their lamps, the necessary qualifications of faith and good works. *Calmet's Commentary.*

† For an explication of this parable, we may observe, that the man travelling into a far country is our Saviour Christ, who, by ascending into heaven, has deprived the church of his corporal presence; that his servants are Christians in general, or, more particularly, his apostles and first ministers, who suc-

ceeded him in the propagation of the Gospel; and that the talents committed to their management, are the supernatural gifts which he bestowed upon them, and all the endowments, both of body and mind, all the helps, and means, and opportunities, which he gives us, in order to serve him, and to work out our own salvation. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†² The reason of our Lord's mingling the signs of the particular destruction of Jerusalem and of the general dissolution of the world together, was to engage us, at the approach of particular judgments upon cities and nations, to be always mindful and prepared for the general judgment of the last day. There is one thing however peculiar in his expression upon this occasion, viz. that "this generation should not pass away until all these things were done," Mark xiii. 30.; for if his words immediately foregoing related to the coming of the day of judgment and general dissolution of all things, it will be hard to conceive how that great event should be said to come to pass before the extinction of the race of mankind then in being. But in answer to this, it may be observed, that the Jews were wont to divide the duration of the world into three grand epochs, which, according to their style, were called generations, each consisting of two thousand years; whereof the first was before the law, the second under the law, and the third under the Gospel; and it is to the last of these generations, as they called them, that this latter part of our Lord's prophetic discourse does properly belong. A misconception of this expression, indeed, led some primitive Christians into a mistake concerning the approach of the final judgment: And as long as that mistake had no other tendency than to make them more fervent and zealous and heavenly minded; more patient and heroic under sufferings and persecutions; and more fervent and diligent in preaching the Gospel, &c. the generality of the inspired writers might think this a sufficient reason to overlook it: But St Peter, we find, takes particular care to rectify this mistake, and to obviate the objection which a spirit of infidelity had taken occasion to raise from it, as we may see at large in 2 Pet. iii. *Univers. Hist. lib. ii. c. 11.*

†³ That this throne of glory will be nothing else but a bright and refulgent cloud, we have reason to believe from the testimony of the angels that attended at our Lord's ascension. For while the apostles

summons all the people † that ever lived in the world to appear before him ; and having made inquisition into the discharge of the great duty of charity, should punish or reward mankind according as he finds that they have acquitted themselves in that respect.

From Matth. x. 10. to the end, Mark. xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

As soon as our Lord had finished this prophetic discourse, he went in the evening to Bethany, and there supped at the house of one Simon, whom he had formerly cured of a leprosy. At supper, Mary, to testify her love and respect, came, and out of an alabaster cruse, poured a large quantity of such rich ointment upon his head as filled the whole house with its fragrant smell. This seeming prodigality raised the indignation of the rest of the apostles as well as Judas ; and as they made the same objection, so our Saviour's defence of Mary turns upon the same topics ; only he adds, that, " as she had done a great and generous action, wheresoever his Gospel should be preached through the whole world, there should her munificent regard to him be likewise published, to her everlasting honour and renown."

When supper was ended, our Lord repaired to his usual lodgings at Martha's house, and on the day following, in all probability, continued at Bethany, without going to Jerusalem, as he had done the days before. In the mean time, the Sanhedrim †² assembled at the palace of Caiphas †³ the high priest, where the priests, scribes, and elders of the people, had a solemn debate and consultation, how they might take Jesus by some secret stratagem, and put him to death. This was the second council that they had held upon this occasion ; and though therein it was determined that he should die, yet they thought it not so advisable to put the thing in execution in the time of the ensuing solemnity, lest it should cause a sedition among the people, who had the highest veneration for him.

When evening was come, he, with his apostles, supped (very probably) at Martha's house, and, while they were at table, considering with himself that his time was now short, he was minded to give them a testimony of his love, and, from his own example, teach them two virtues, which, of all others, were more especially requisite in their ministry of the gospel, humility and charity. To this purpose, rising from the table, lay-

then present were " looking stedfastly towards heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them, in white apparel, who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up to heaven ? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come, in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven," Acts i. 9, 10. ; which compared with our Lord's own declarations concerning his second coming, Mark xiii. 26. with what St Paul foretels, 1 Thess. iv. 17. and St John foresaw, Rev xiv. 14. are abundantly sufficient to justify the generally received opinion, that, as our Blessed Saviour went up into heaven, so he shall return from thence to judgment upon a true and material cloud. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. i.

† The manner in which our Saviour expresses himself upon this occasion, seems to imply, that the general judgment is to be held in some particular place ; and, from a passage in the prophet Joel, several modern as well as ancient doctors are of opinion, that the valley of Jehoshaphat is appointed to be that place : For I will " gather all nations," says God, " and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and I will plead with them there for my people, and for my heritage Israel," chap. iii. 2. but as the word Jehoshaphat in that text signifies the

" Judgment of God," the valley of Jehoshaphat denotes any place in general where God exercises his judgments. The truth is, if all nations of the world must appear " before the judgment-seat of Christ," and that " they may receive the things done in the body, are to be clothed with their resurrection-bodies, there must necessarily be required a very large space to contain them ; and therefore St Paul seems to point at the grand expansum of the air as the most convenient for that purpose, 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. *Calmet's* Commentary.

†² The consultation which the Sanhedrim held, and the agreement which Judas made with them to betray our Lord, were on Wednesday ; and therefore the church gives it as a reason why we ought to fast on Wednesday and Friday, because on the one Christ was betrayed, and suffered on the other. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†³ This Caiphas is called by the Jewish historian Joseph. The high priesthood he purchased of Valerius Gratus ; and, after he had ten years enjoyed that dignity, was deposed by Vitellius, governor of Syria, and succeeded by Jonathan, the son of Ananus, or Annas. *Calmet's* Dictionary and Commentary.

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ing aside his upper garment, and girding himself with a towel, (as the manner of servants then was when they waited on their masters) he poured water into a bason, and began to wash his apostles feet, and to wipe them with the towel. Amazed at this condescension, St Peter (when he came to him), refused at first to admit of such a servile office from his heavenly master; but when he urged the necessity, and in some measure intimated to him the symbolical intent of it, he permitted him to do just what he thought fit.

When our Lord had made an end of washing his apostles feet, he put on his garment, and sat down at table again, and began to tell them the meaning of what he had done, viz. "That since he, who was justly acknowledged to be their Lord and Master, had so far debased himself as to wash their feet, they, in imitation of his example, ought to think it no disparagement to them to perform the meanest offices of kindness and charity to one another: for though they were exalted to the dignity of his apostles, yet still they were but his servants; and that therefore it would be an high piece of arrogance in them to assume more state and grandeur than their Master had done before them *."

Soon after this, reflecting with himself how well he had loved, and, upon all occasions, how kindly he had treated these his disciples, he was not a little concerned that any of them should prove so base and ungrateful as to betray him; and when he had declared the thing, and Peter, desirous to know the person, beckoned to John, who was nearest his master, to ask him the question, he signified to him that it was Judas Iscariot, to whom he gave a sop (as he told John he would), and when he had so done, † "bad him go about what he had to do with all expedition;" which the rest of the apostles, being ignorant of the signal which our Lord had given John, supposed to be an order to Judas (as he was the purse-bearer) either to give something to the poor, or to provide what was necessary for the feast.

As soon as supper was ended, Judas, being now confirmed in his wicked resolution, left Bethany in haste; and, understanding that the Sanhedrim was met at the high priest's house, thither he repaired, and, upon their giving him a sufficient reward, offered to betray his master, and (in the manner that they desired) to deliver him privately into their hands. This proposition was highly pleasing to the council, who immediately bargained with him for thirty pieces of silver †²; and when Judas had received the

* [That all this happened at Bethany whilst our Lord was with his apostles at supper in the house of *Martha* seems to me very improbable. When he washed his apostles feet, no person appears to have been present but he and they; and he surely acted as Master of the house, or at least of the supper, himself. Dr Hales is of opinion that it was after he had eaten with his disciples the *pascal* supper in Jerusalem, and immediately before he instituted his own supper, that he washed their feet, to give them a lesson of humility; and notwithstanding the powerful objections urged against that opinion by Whitby, I am strongly inclined to adopt it. The words *πρὸ ἧς τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα*, which our translators render—"Now before the feast of the passover,"—do not mean *days* before it, but rather just before they were to enter on the celebration (a); and though it was not till the pascal supper, or at least the first course of it, was finished, (*δείπνου γενομένου*) that our Lord girt himself with the towel, &c. it seems to have been just before he sat down to supper, that he resolved to exhibit this proof of his love to his own.]

† This was not a command to Judas to go on with his wicked enterprise, but only a declaration made by Christ of his readiness to suffer death; "*Vox hæc non jubentis est, sed sinentis, non frepidi, sed parati,*" says *Leo*, de *Passione*, ser. 7. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*.

†² These pieces were staters, or shekels of the sanctuary, thirty of which amounted to three pounds and fifteen shillings of our money, the usual price that was given for "a man or a maid-servant," *Exod. xxi. 32*. It is hardly supposable that any of these pieces are at this time extant, though both at Rome and Paris there are pieces shewn which are pretended to be the very same that were part of the price of the purchase of our Saviour's blood; but persons well skilled in that art assure us, that these pieces are only the ancient medals of Rhodes, on the one side stamped with a colossus, which represented the sun, and on the other with a rose, which was the city-arms, as we call it. *Echard's Ecclesiastical History*, lib. i. c. 4. and *Calmet's Commentary*.

money, from that moment, he sought an opportunity to betray his master, in the absence of the multitude.

While Judas was thus bartering for his Master's blood, his Master was preparing the rest of his apostles for his departure, and endeavouring to comfort them with this consideration,—That his death would be a means to display both his own and his Father's glory, as it was a preliminary to his resurrection and ascension into heaven: As therefore it was decreed that he must leave them, the stronger should their union be with one another; and therefore he recommended very earnestly to them the duty of mutual love; a duty which had hitherto been so much neglected, that his enjoining it then might well be accounted a new commandment, and what was to be the common badge and character of his true disciples † for ever after.

When the day || before the feast of the Passover was come, our Lord sent Peter and John to Jerusalem, to prepare all things according to the law; and, lest they should want a convenient room for the celebration of the Paschal supper, he had predisposed the heart of a certain host in the city ‡ to accommodate them with one. They, therefore, having provided a lamb, slain it in the temple, sprinkled its blood on the altar, and done every thing else that was required of them, they returned to their Master at Bethany; who, perceiving that his late discourse about leaving the world and them had blasted all their hopes of secular greatness, and left them melancholy and disconsolate, stayed a good part of the day with them, in order to raise their drooping spirits with the assurances of an happy immortality, which (as he told them) he was going before †³ to prepare for them in heaven, and wanted not power to do it, because he and his Father (as to their Divinity) were perfectly the same; and with the promise of sending them the Holy Spirit from above, which he took care to represent as a Comforter †⁴, to

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

† The disciples of the Baptist were known by the austerity of their lives, and the disciples of the Pharisees by their habit and separation from other men; but our Blessed Saviour was willing to have his disciples known by their mutual love and affection to each other, which, in the primitive ages, was so great, that it made the heathens, with admiration, cry out, "See how they love one another!" and even hate and envy them for their mutual affection. *Whitby's Annotations.*

|| The words in St Matthew, chap. xxvi. 17. are, "the first day of the feast;" but it is no uncommon thing to put the word *first* for that which properly went before. Thus in the Old Testament it is said, "that the hands of the witnesses shall be *first* upon him" that is condemned to die, "to put him to death, and afterwards the hands of all the people," Deut. xvii. 7. but if "the hands of the witnesses" should first dispatch him, there would be no occasion for the hands of the people; and therefore the sense of the word *first* in this place must be, that the witnesses should smite him before he was delivered into the hands of the people. In the first book of Maccabees it is twice said of Alexander the Great, that he reigned the *first* over Greece, chap. i. 1. and vi. 2. but every one knows, that before him there were several kings in Macedonia; and therefore the meaning of the words must be, that he reigned in Macedonia before he reigned in Asia: And, to the same purpose, in the New Testament, we find St Paul styling our Blessed Lord "the *first-born* of every creature," Coloss. i. 15. i. e. begotten of the Father before the

production of any creature; and telling us that "the husbandman that laboureth, must *first* partake of the fruits," 2 Tim. ii. 6. i. e. he must labour before he can reap the fruits of his travel; and, in the like acceptance of the word, the *first* day of the feast may be interpreted the day before the feast, as might be proved likewise by examples from heathen authors. *Calmet's Commentaries.*

†² It is to be observed, that the houses in Jerusalem, at this time of the feast, were of common right to any that would eat the passover in them, and yet, it is not unlikely, that our Lord might be well known to the master of this house, who very probably took it as an high honour that he had made choice of his, rather than any other, to eat the Paschal supper in. *Whitby's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

†³ Our Saviour speaks this in allusion to travellers, who send generally one of the company before, to provide good accommodation for the rest. *Beausobre's Annotations.*

†⁴ The word *παράκλητος*, in this place, signifies both an *advocate* and a *comforter*; and the Holy Spirit, when he descended upon the apostles, did the part of an advocate, by confirming their testimony by signs and miracles, and various gifts imparted to them, and by pleading their cause before kings and rulers, and against all their adversaries, Matth. x. 18. and Luke xxi. 15. and he did the part of a comforter likewise, as he was sent for the consolation of the apostles, and all succeeding Christians in all their troubles, filling their hearts with joy and gladness, and giving them an inward testimony of God's love to them, to-

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&c or 31,

support them in their afflictions; as a teacher, to instruct them in all necessary truths; and as an advocate, to plead and defend their cause against their enemies. So that they had no reason to be dejected, because, in this sense, he would be always with them; because whatever they asked in his name, his father would give them; and because, when he was gone, they should be enabled to do miracles, † greater than what they had seen him do: (a) And therefore "Peace I leave with you," says he, taking his farewell, "my peace I give unto you: †² Not as the world giveth, give I unto you; let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

As soon as he had ended this discourse, he arose, and, with his disciples, going towards Jerusalem, arrived at the place where they were to eat the Paschal lamb. In the evening, when it grew dark, they sat down to the table in a leaning posture †³; and as he began to renew the discourse, "that one in the company should certainly betray him, but that better it had been for the man who did so, if he had never been born," the concern and sadness was so general, that every one began to enquire for himself, whether he was the man? Until it came to Judas's turn, who, having the confidence to ask the same question, received a positive answer, that he was: Whereupon

gether with an assurance of their future happiness, Rom. viii. 15, 16. *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

† What interpreters say of diseases healed by the shadow of Peter, and by napkins sent from St Paul, of more miracles performed throughout the world, and for the space of three whole centuries, devils ejected every where, is not unfitly mentioned here as answering to our Saviour's words; and yet we cannot but think, that this should chiefly be referred to the wonderful success of the Gospel preached by the apostles after the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them; to the gift of tongues, and the interpretation of them; of prophecy, and discerning of spirits; and the imparting these gifts to others by baptism, and the imposition of the apostles hands. For as this was a greater work in our blessed Saviour to assist so many with his mighty power, when absent at so great a distance as the earth is from heaven, than to do miracles in their presence; so to communicate these gifts to men, and to enable them to transfer them to others, is (as Arnobius expresses it) "*super omnia sitæ potestatis, continentisque sub se omnium rerum causas, et rationum facultatumque naturas,*" lib. i. p. 32. and especially when our Lord succeeded so little in his three years preaching here on earth, and had so few sincere disciples, that he should enable his apostles, at one sermon, to convert some thousands, and cause his Gospel to fly like lightning through the world, and beat down all the strong holds of opposition, this is truly wonderful! *Whitby's* Annotations.

(a) John xiv. 27.

†² i. e. in empty wishes of what they neither do nor can give; or that external peace which is both temporary and uncertain; but inward peace of conscience, arising from the pardon of your sins, Rom. v. i. from the sense of the favour of God, and of my presence with you by the Blessed Spirit; that peace which no man taketh from you, which will keep your hearts in the faith, Phil. iv. 7. and free you from all solicitude and fear of the world. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†³ At the first institution of the Paschal supper, the

Israelites were commanded to eat it in a standing posture, and in haste, Exod. xii. 11. but here we find our Saviour and his apostles eating it lying down, or inclining on their left side, as it was then the manner of the Jews. When, or upon what account this alteration came to be made, we have no other information than what we find in the writings of their Rabbins, viz. that they used this leaning posture as freemen do in memory of their freedom; and therefore, though at their ordinary meals they commonly sat at table as we do, yet whenever they were minded to regale themselves, they used this posture of discumbency, and especially at the Paschal supper no other was allowed. Thus lying on beds or couches made for that purpose, with a table before them, whereon they leaned, they stretched out their feet behind them, thereby to remove the least show of standing to attend, or to go upon any one's employment, which might carry in it any colour of servitude or contrariety to their freedom. And from this posture of sitting or leaning upon a table with their left elbow one after another, we may rightly understand those texts which speak of the beloved apostle's leaning on the bosom or on the breast of Jesus, John xiii. 23. and xxi. 20. as the learned Lightfoot, in his discourse of the temple service has amply shown. *Pool's* Annotations. [That the Jews, at their ordinary meals, commonly sat at table as we do, seems to be a mistake. Lightfoot indeed doth say, "*Vulgò mensæ in lectis jacentes accumbebant, et in aliis quidem conviviis sedebant, ut nos sedemus, erecto corpore;*" but for this erect position he brings no other evidence than some Rabbinical testimonies, which, were they more decided than they are, would be greatly outweighed by the testimony of the evangelists. The meal of which Jesus partook with the Pharisee, (St Luke vii. 36.) was surely a common meal; and yet it is evident that he then ate in the recumbent posture, for had he been sitting, as we sit at dinner, the tears of the penitent woman standing behind him, could not have fallen on his feet, nor could she, in that position, have wiped his feet with the hairs of her head.]

he soon withdrew † from his Master, and adjoined himself to his enemies, who were impatiently expecting the performance of his promise.

When the Paschal supper was ended, our Saviour proceeded to the institution of another, in commemoration of his own death and passion. For he took bread, and when he had blessed it, and broke it, he distributed it to his apostles, calling it his body; and after he had so done, he took the cup of wine, and having, in like manner, blessed it, he gave it among them, calling it his †² “blood of the new covenant,” and commanding them to do the same, i. e. to eat bread and drink wine in this sacramental manner, even unto the end of the world, “in remembrance of him.”

After this institution of the form of that memorial, which his apostles and their posterity were to continue, he gave them to understand that this was the last Paschal supper which he should eat, and the last wine that he should drink with them, until †³ “he drank it new in the kingdom of God:” From which words some of his apostles inferring, that though his kingdom was not to be then, yet it would not fail to commence immediately after his resurrection, they fell into unseasonable contentions about priority, or who should have the office of the highest trust and honour about their Master; which our Lord endeavoured to repress by the same arguments that he had

From Matth.
xx. 19. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end.
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

† It is a great question among the ancients, whether Judas was present at our Lord's institution of the sacrament of his body and blood, or absented himself before. St Luke's words, which are subsequent to the institution, “Behold the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table,” chap. xxii. 21. seem to imply that he was present, and partook of the Eucharist; but many commentators are of a contrary opinion, viz. that after our Saviour had declared him to be the man who should betray him, (which was between the Paschal and Eucharistical supper) he immediately left the company, and went away; and that consequently there is a mislocation in St Luke's words. *Calnel's Commentary and Dictionary* under the word *Judas*. [The authoritative opinion of the church of England, however, certainly is, that he was present. See the *Exhortation* appointed to be read on the Sunday or holy-day preceding the communion.]

†¹ The reason which our Saviour gives for our participating of the cup, viz. “Because it is the blood of the New Testament, which is shed for the remission of sins,” concerns the laity as well as the priests, because his blood was equally shed for both; and therefore the command, “Drink ye all of this,” to which the reason is annexed, concerns them likewise. But there is another reason why our Lord said to his apostles, “Eat this bread and drink this cup,” viz. that by so doing they might “remember his death,” his body broken, and his blood shed for them, says St Luke, and “shew it forth till his second coming,” 1 Cor. xi. 26. Now this, as St Paul demonstrates, concerns all believers as well as priests, and therefore the drinking of the cup, (by which this commemoration is made) as well as eating of the bread, must equally concern them. *Whitby's Annotations*.

†³ Some are of opinion, that by the “kingdom of God” here, (as in several other places) we are not to understand heaven, or the happiness we are there to enjoy, but rather the Gospel-state, and the kingdom of Christ, which began at his resurrection, and was

more fully established when “he sat down at the right hand of power,” and was “made heir of all things;” and consequently that our Lord's drinking of wine, may then relate to his “eating and drinking with his disciples after he arose from the dead,” Acts x. 41. but because the felicities of heaven are frequently represented under the metaphors of eating and drinking, Matth. xxvi. 29. Luke xxii. 18. others make the sense of our Saviour's words to be this—“I will not henceforth drink of the fruit of the vine, but both you and I, in my Father's glory, shall be satisfied with rivers of pleasure, far sweeter and more excellent than the richest wines can be.” There is however a third way of interpreting this passage, which, by comparing it with the words of St Luke, seems by much the most probable, and that is, by making the fruit of the vine signify, in a peculiar manner, the cup in the passover, or the cup of charity, in the postcœnium of the passover, wherein the sacrament of Christ's body and blood was founded. For that Christ was now to die, and neither before nor after his resurrection to eat any more passovers with his apostles, or any more to drink this cup of charity, now designed to a Christian use, is sufficiently evident. It is observable therefore in St Luke, chap. xxii. 16. that the words are directly applied to the passover; “I have desired to eat this passover, for I will no more eat of it;” and by repeating the cup, ver. 18. the evangelist must mean, the cup of the passover, or the sacramental cup of charity, which succeeded it; and consequently our Saviour's meaning must be,—That he would no more use these typical adumbrations, being himself now ready to perform what was signified and expressed by them, i. e. to pass suddenly from earth to heaven, through a red sea of blood, and there to complete the mystery of the sacrament, by uniting his disciples one to another, and making them all partakers of his heavenly riches. *Whitby's, Pool's, and Hammond's Annotations*.

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formerly employed (a) upon the like occasion : And then turning to Peter, he apprised him of the imminent danger which he and his brethren were in, and what a severe trial the great enemy of mankind would very speedily bring upon them ; to whom Peter, in confidence of his own courage and resolution, answered for himself, that “ he was ready to go with him to prison and to death ;” but our Saviour, who best knew his weakness, gave him to understand, that † “ before the crowing of the cock he should deny him thrice.”

After this our Lord, in his final exhortation to his apostles, reminded them of the choice which he had made of them, and the kind treatment which he had all along shewn them ; and that therefore it was their duty, and their interest both, to adhere to him “ as the branch did to the vine,” in order to bring forth the fruits of righteousness, and to continue immoveable in the profession of his religion, notwithstanding all the persecutions they should meet with, which indeed would prove so violent and outrageous, that some men would think they did God service in killing them. This however should not utterly deject them, because his absence from them would not be long, His death was but to usher in his resurrection and ascension ; and the benefits which would accrue to them from these, viz. in the mission of the Holy Ghost to be their guide and Comforter, in his own intercession for them at God’s right-hand, and in their prayers and supplications, which (if offered up in his name) would not fail of admittance to the throne of grace, would abundantly compensate the want of his presence : And (b) “ therefore I have told you these things, says he, that in me ye might have peace : In the world ye shall have tribulation ; but †² be of good cheer, I have overcome the world †³.”

These comfortable exhortations to his apostles were attended with a solemn prayer

(a) Matth. xx. 25.

† It is commonly remarked by profane authors, that the cock usually crows twice in a night ; once about midnight, and the second time at the fourth watch of the night, or much about break of day ; that this latter, as being the louder and more observable, is that which is properly called ἀλεκτοροφωνία, or cock-crowing ; and that of this crowing of the cock the evangelists are to be understood, when they relate Christ’s words thus, “before the cock crow (i. e. before that time of the night which is emphatically so called) thou shalt deny me thrice,” appears from St Mark’s saying, that the cock crew after his first denial of Christ, chap. xiv. 68. and crew the second time after his third denial, ver. 72. *Whitby’s* Annotations.

(b) John xvi. 33.

†¹ Though “to be of good cheer” under tribulation does by no means infer that firmness of mind (as some philosophers of old miscalled it) which preserves a man from being at all afflicted with calamities, or moved from his usual easiness of temper ; yet thus much it certainly means,—That neither the sharpness of any affliction we feel, nor the terror of any we fear, should so far vanquish our reason and religion, as to drive us upon unlawful methods of declining the one, or delivering ourselves from the other. We are to satisfy ourselves in the justice, the wisdom, and goodness of him, who orders all the events that befall us ; to entertain them all with meekness and much patience ; to bring our wills into subjection to the Divine will ; to rejoice in the testimony of a good con-

science, and preserve it at any rate, though with the hazard, nay, certain loss of all our worldly advantages ; and to set the supports and rewards of persecuted truth and afflicted piety in opposition to all the discouragements and pressures from abroad, and all the frailties of feeble and too-yielding flesh and blood at home. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii.

†² By the world, in this passage, we are, no doubt, to understand the evil of the world, the wickedness, the malice, the temptations, the troubles, all that we have reason to fear, or to flee from, either in this or the next life. Now the wickedness of the world Christ has overcome, by expiating the sins of mankind in the sacrifice of himself upon the cross, and by the powerful assistance of his grace, enabling all the faithful to conquer the passions of corrupt nature. The malice of it he overcame, by disappointing the designs of the devil, and his wicked instruments, against himself and his Gospel, making his own sufferings fatal to the contrivers, and saving to all penitent believers. The temptations of it he overcame, by that severe, but still social virtue, and heavenly piety, which shone so bright in all his conversation : and the troubles of it, by submitting to hunger and thirst, to poverty and grief, to live like the meanest, and to be treated like the worst of men. Nay, even death itself, our last and most dreaded enemy, he has overcome ; taken from this strong man the armour wherein he trusted, and divided his spoils. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii.

and intercession to Almighty God; for himself, that as he had executed the commission for which he came into the world, he might be re-instated in the same glory which he had with his Father from all eternity; for his apostles, that they might live in brotherly love and unity, be preserved in all dangers, and sanctified in their minds and conversations; and for all succeeding Christians, that they might continue in the communion of the saints here, and be admitted to the sight and participation of his glory and felicity hereafter: And having concluded all with an hymn, † which he and his apostles sung together, he left the city, and passing over the brook Cedron, †² came to a place called Gethsemane, †³ where there was a garden, well known to Judas, because thither our Lord and his apostles used frequently to repair, both for retirement and devotion.

As they were going to this place, our Lord, with mighty concern, began to tell them, that that very night (a) the prophecy †⁴ of Zechariah, concerning the shepherd's being smitten, and the whole flock dispersed, would be fulfilled in his and their persons, forasmuch as every one of them upon the distress that was going to befall him, would flee away from him and forsake him. This Peter thought a disparagement to his courage, and therefore assured our Lord, that †⁵ "though all mankind should forsake him, yet

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15 to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19.
to the end.

† This hymn is supposed by most interpreters to be part of the great Allelujah, which began at the cxiith, and ended at the cxviii Psalm, and, by the Jewish rituals, was ordered to be sung constantly at the Paschal supper. Others think, that it was a different hymn, composed by Christ, and accommodated to the particular institution of the Eucharist; but Grotius is of opinion, that it was no other than that thanksgiving of his, which St John has recorded in the xviith chapter of his Gospel. As our Blessed Saviour, however, in all his religious conduct, was no lover of innovations, it seems more probable, that, upon this occasion, he made use of the Psalms that were then customary in the Jewish church, in which (as the Jews observe) are mentioned the sorrows of the Messiah, and the resurrection of the dead. *Howell's History in the Notes, and Calmet's Commentary.*

†² Which in the Old Testament is called Kidron, and runs along the bottom of the valley of Jehoshaphat, which lies to the east between Jerusalem and Mount Olivet. Into this valley was conveyed the blood, poured out at the foot of the altar, which, as it discoloured the water, gave it the name of Cedron (as some think) from the word *Kiddar*, which signifies *blackness*, though others rather imagine, that it had that name from the cedar trees that were planted on each side of it. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament, part i. and Whitby's Alphabetical Table.*

†³ The garden of Gethsemane, which took its name from the wine presses in it, (as Mr Maundrell informs us) is an even plat of ground, not above fifty-seven yards square, lying between the foot of Mount Olivet and the brook Cedron. It is well planted with olive trees, and those of so old a growth, that they are believed to be the same that stood here in our Saviour's time; but this is hardly possible. At the upper corner of the garden, is a flat naked ledge of a rock, supposed to be the place on which the apostles, Peter, James, and John, fell asleep during our Lord's agony; a few paces from thence is a grotto, in which he is said to have undergone that bitter part of his passion; and (what is very remarkable) in the midst

of the garden there is a small slip of ground, twelve yards long and one broad, reputed the very path on which the traitor Judas walked up to Christ, when he said, "Hail Master, and kissed him," which the Turks themselves have never walked in, as accounting the very ground accursed, on which was acted such an infamous tragedy. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table, and Wells's Geography of the New Testament, part i.*

(a) Zech. xiii. 7.

†⁴ The passage to which our Saviour alludes is this, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts. Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones," Zech. xiii. 7. Where we may observe, that our Saviour only cites the words in the middle of the verse, because indeed those that both preceded and followed them, were not at all to his purpose: And in this he imitated the ancient doctors of the Jewish church, who, in their allegations of Scripture passages, were wont to make use of no more than what was subservient to their argument. Some however imagine, because the words of Zechariah seem primarily to relate to an evil shepherd, to whom God threatens the sword, that Christ does not mention them as a prediction concerning him and his apostles, but only as a proverbial expression: But this I think is sufficiently confuted by our Lord's saying, "for it is written," ver. 31. Nor is the change of the person in the evangelist, from what occurs in the prophet, of any moment, because it was very customary with the Jewish doctors, in their citations of Scripture, to make such alterations. *Surenhusii Concil. in Loc. ex Vet. Test. apud Matt. and Whitby's Annotations.*

†⁵ We may be bold to affirm of this resolution, that it was as honest an one, i. e. both as just in the matter, and as sincere in the intention, as ever was made by man, or ever shall be made to the end of the world, and yet this resolution miscarried, and ended only in the shame of the resolver. St Chrysostom takes notice of three faults that may be reckoned in it. 1st, The little consideration Peter had of our Saviour's

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would not he;" and being told again, that he would certainly deny him before the time of cock-crowing, with the utmost vehemence he affirmed, that "though he should die, he would not deny him;" and the like profession of undaunted adherence made all the rest.

When they were come to the garden, our Lord ordered the rest of his apostles to tarry for him at a certain place, whilst himself with the three that were most intimate with him, viz. Peter, James, and John, retired a while to his private devotions; and as they were going along, he required them to join their prayers with his, that they might not be delivered over to temptation. But they were not gone above the distance of a stone's cast, before he found his spirits depressed, and his soul "sadly sorrowful even unto death;" which when he had discovered to the three apostles, and desired them to watch with him a little in this trying and momentous juncture, he withdrew from them; and then throwing himself prostrate on the ground, begged of God, "That, if it was possible, (as all things were possible to him) he might be excused from drinking the bitter potion †, whose black ingredients filled him with horror and amazement; nevertheless in this he submitted himself entirely to his Divine pleasure." And having prayed to this effect, he returned to his apostles; but finding them asleep, he awoke them, and in a reproof full of love, reminded Peter more especially of his late promises and present neglect of him, when he most of all stood in need of his comfort and assistance. He advised him therefore to keep himself awake for fear of the temptations that were busy about him; and added this compassionate observation, that though the †² spirit was willing and ready enough to make good resolutions, yet the flesh was weak and unable very often to put them in execution.

Thrice did our Blessed Lord retire and pray in this manner; but in the last time, his sense of God's indignation against the sins of mankind, and the dismal prospect of what he was to suffer in the expiation of them, made his prayer more vehement, and his agonies so violent, that the sweat which fell from his body was like large drops of blood †³; and human nature must have been exhausted under it, had not an angel †⁴

predictions concerning his fall. 2dly, The preference which he gave himself above the rest of his brethren. And, 3dly, The presumption he placed in his own strength, instead of imploring ability of him whence all human sufficiency is derived; and therefore the Son of God, says he, suffered him to fall, in order to cure his arrogance and vain confidence in himself. *Young's Sermons*, vol. ii. and *Chrysost.* in *Matth.* Hom. lxxxiii.

† What we are to understand by the bitter potion which our Lord here deprecates, we shall explain at large in our answer to the following objections, and need only here observe, that the afflictions which God sends on men or nations, are often in Scripture expressed by the name of a cup, *Ezek.* xxiii. 31, &c. *Matth.* xx. 23. *Revel.* xiv. 10. and that this is a metaphor borrowed from an ancient custom of giving a cup full of poison among heathen nations, to those that were condemned to die, and of gall, on such occasions among the Jews, to lessen the pain of the person that was to suffer. *Beausobre's Annotations*, and *Howell's History* in the Notes.

†² These words of our Saviour are not intended as an excuse, or mitigation of the apostles sinful neglect of their master, but as a motive to their vigilance and prayer, and seem to imply thus much:—"You have all made large promises, 'that if you should die with me, you would not forsake me,' and this you said

really, and with a purpose so to do; yet let me tell you, when the temptation actually assaults; when fear, shame, and pain, the danger of punishment, and of death, are within view and present to your sense; the weakness of the flesh will certainly prevail over these resolutions if you use not the greatest vigilance, and do not pray with fervency for the Divine assistance." *Whiby's Annotations*.

†³ The words in the original text do not indeed signify that the matter of this sweat was blood, but only that it was thick and viscous, like blood falling from the nose in a small clot at the end of any one's bleeding; but since in some distempers (as Aristotle tells us) it is no uncommon thing for people to sweat blood; and when men are bitten with a certain kind of serpents in India, (according to the account of *Diodorus Siculus*) they are tormented with excessive pains, and generally siezed with a bloody sweat, we cannot see why this agony of our Saviour's might not be so violent as to force blood out of his capillary vessels, and mix it with his sweat. *Whiby's Annotations*.

†⁴ St Luke is the only evangelist that makes mention of this angelical attendance upon our Saviour in this time of his agony; and as there were several, both Latin and Greek copies, that in St Jerom's time wanted this part of history, Epiphanius imagines that this was a correction of some ignorant, though per-

from heaven been immediately sent to strengthen and support him. With this recruit he returned the third time to his apostles; but finding them still in the same sleepy condition, he told them, that now they might sleep on as long as they pleased, because he had no farther occasion for their assistance; that, however, it would not be improper for them to arise, because the traitor who was to deliver him up to his enemies was just at hand. Nor were the words well out of his mouth before Judas, accompanied with † a band of soldiers and officers, together with some of the chief priests, Pharisees, and elders of the people, all armed with swords and staves †², came to apprehend him.

From Matth. x. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19 to the end.

To prevent all mistakes, the traitor had given them a sign, that the person whom he should kiss was the man they were to apprehend; and therefore approaching our Lord with an address of seeming civility, he saluted him, and in return received a reproof of his perfidy †³, but in such gentle and easy terms, as spake a mind perfectly calm and undisturbed; and then stepping forward with an air of majesty, our Lord demanded of the soldiers, whom they wanted? They told him, Jesus of Nazareth. He replied that he was the person: but when they were going to lay rude hands upon him, the impetuous rays of glory which darted from his Divine face, struck so fiercely upon their eyes, that they fell to the ground. However, instead of taking the advantage of their consternation to make his escape, (as he had done at other times) he again demanded of them, who it was they wanted? And when they again made him the same answer, he told them, that if he was the person, he expected that his disciples should depart unmolested.

When the multitude began to lay hands on Jesus, some of his apostles, having swords †⁴ with them, asked their master if they might draw in his defence: But before they

haps well-meaning Christians, who being offended at the supposed weakness that appears in our Saviour upon this occasion, left it out of their copies; never considering that the Divinity which dwelt in him, had at this time substracted its influence, so that being left to his human nature only, he needed the comfort of an angel: otherwise, as with a word he made the whole band of soldiers fall to the ground, and with a touch healed the ear of Malchus, he even now gave sufficient indications of the Divinity residing in him. *Whitby's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

† At the time of the passover, it was customary for the Roman president to send a whole band of a thousand men for a guard to the temple; and it seems to be some of these that came to apprehend our Saviour, because, by Judas's giving them a sign whereby they might know him, it looks as if they were strangers to his person. *Whitby's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

†³ It is probable, that Judas thought they could not do this, but that as Jesus had at other times conveyed himself from the multitude when they attempted to stone him, John viii. 59. and to cast him down a precipice, Luke iv. 29. so he would have done now; and that when he found he did not rescue himself, he "repented, and went and hanged himself," Matth. xxvii. 5. *Whitby's Annotations.*

†⁴ The reproof is expressed in these words,—"Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" Luke xxii. 48. 1st, To betray in this case was equivalent to murder. It was to deliver him into their hands, who he knew, both from common rumour and his master's own words, Matth. xvi. 21. had a design

upon his life; and therefore this could not be done without express malice; but, 2dly, This betrayer was a servant; one who had given up his name and faith to our Lord, and done himself the honour at least, if no other benefit, to preach his Gospel, and to work miracles in the power of his commission, and therefore, for such an one to betray him, could not be done without great perfidiousness. 3dly, The person betrayed is called the Son of Man, which is both the humblest and most obliging of our Saviour's titles, and implies, that even to Judas himself he had always been a kind and gracious Master, had treated him with the same respect, and given him the same advice and overtures that he had done to the rest of the twelve, and therefore to betray him was high ingratitude. 4thly, and lastly, To betray him with a kiss, which all the world had been used to interpret as a constant symbol either of love or homage, (both which his master had so well merited at his hands) and now to make this a signal of his treason, was to play a piece of the most gross hypocrisy. So severe is the accusation which our Lord brings against his abandoned apostle, though expressed in the mildest terms! *Young's Sermons, vol. ii.*

†⁴ Before our Saviour left the house where he supped, he had said to his apostles, "He that has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one," Luke xxii. 36.; but that this is no command to them to buy swords, or to use them in the defence of their master, when he should be apprehended, is apparent from his saying, that "two swords were enough," ver. 38.; which certainly could never be sufficient to repel that band of armed men which he foreknew would come against him; and from his reprehending Peter for

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had his answer, Peter had drawn his sword, and in great fury struck at Malchus, one of the high priest's servants, with a design to cleave his head, though he happened only to cut off his right ear. Our Saviour, however, rebuking his intemperate zeal, commanded him to put up his sword, † because he had no occasion for any human aid, who had legions †² of angels at his command; and then, having cured the man's ear with a touch, he turned about, and expostulated with the soldiery the indignity of apprehending him in so scandalous a manner, as if he were a thief, or some vile malefactor, when they had daily an opportunity of taking him in the temple. But, say what he would, it availed nothing. They immediately bound him, and led him away.

The apostles now, seeing their master thus treated, lost all their courage, and (as he had foretold them) left him, and betook themselves to flight. For such was the violence of the soldiers, that, seeing a young man †³ following the company with nothing but a night-gown on, and supposing him to be one of our Lord's disciples, they laid hold on him; but he, by quitting his garment, slipped out of their hands, and fled away naked.

using one in this manner, Matth. xxvi. 52. which, if he intended his words to be understood literally, was no discommendable thing. They therefore are only a monition to his apostles, that times were now become so perilous, that, if things were to be acted by human power, there would be more need for swords than ever: For such symbolical ways of expression were very common among the eastern people. Some annotators however have observed, that the reason why any swords (as we read but of two) were found in our Saviour's family, was, that thereby they might secure themselves from beasts of prey, which, in those parts, were very frequent, and dangerous in the night-time. *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Taylor's Life of Christ*, part ii. sect. 15.

† Our Saviour's words to Peter are these,—“Put up thy sword into its place, for all that take the sword shall perish by the sword,” Matth. xxvi. 52. But this rebuke we must not so understand as absolutely forbidding all manner of using the sword among Christians, but only as teaching us the great duty of submission to the powers that are set over us. One private person is, no doubt, in defence of himself against the assault of another private person, permitted to unsheath his sword; but if it be once granted, that private persons, when they think themselves injured by the magistrate, may take up the sword against him, tumults would be endless, and the authority of the laws, and the decision of judges, precarious. “If therefore neither the malice of the Jews, nor the innocence of our Lord; if neither the truth of our religion, persecuted in its founder, nor the apparent marks of malice and envy, of violence and oppression, which appeared in the whole course of their persecution of him, were sufficient to warrant St Peter to draw the sword in his defence, against that legal authority by which they acted; we must conclude, that neither will any of these pretences suffice to justify any other Christians in the like circumstances now. But if it please God at any time to permit the lawful powers to be against us, we must submit patiently to their authority, and not, with this warm apostle, draw the sword against those to whom God has committed the power of the sword.” *Archbishop Wake's Sermons*. It may be questioned, however, whether this

is the true import of the words; which Grotius and some others have thus interpreted,—“Put up thy sword; there is no need for thy using it in my defence against the injuries of the Jews; for, by God's sentence and decree, they who take the sword, to shed the blood of the innocent, shall perish by the sword; and this the Jews shall find by the tremendous vengeance which the sword of the Romans shall execute upon them for this fact.” Which interpretation is confirmed by what we read in Revel. xiii. 10. “He that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword.” Here is the ground “of the faith and patience of the saints,” viz. that that God to whom vengeance belongs, will plead their cause, and recompence vengeance to their enemies, Romans xii. 19. *Whitby's Annotations*.

†² A legion in the Roman militia, was a body of men consisting of six thousand, composed each of ten cohorts, as a cohort was of fifty maniples, and a manipule of fifteen men; so that twelve legions would amount to seventy thousand angels; but in this our Saviour means no more than a great number. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Beausobre's Annotations*.

†³ Who this young man was, has been a matter of some dispute among the ancients. Epiphanius and St Jerom are of opinion, that it was James the brother of our Lord; but, upon our Lord's being apprehended, he among the rest “forsook him, and fled,” and we hear nothing of his return. St Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Gregory, have a strong imagination that it was John the beloved apostle; but John, we read, was with Christ in the garden clothed, and cannot therefore easily conceive how he came to fly away naked. It seems most probable, therefore, that this young man might be nowise related to our Saviour, but, hearing a noise in the garden, which might not be far distant from the house where he lodged in the village of Gethsemane, he arose and followed the company in his night-gown (as we have rendered it), in pure curiosity to see what was the matter, and that when the guards were for seizing him, he fled away naked, i. e. with nothing but his shirt on; for so the expression may be understood. *Calmet's Commentary*, *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's Annotations*.

The company thus carrying away Jesus, brought him first before Annas †, who was father-in-law to Caiaphas the high priest, and had formerly borne the same office : but Annas sent them to Caiaphas, in whose palace the Sanhedrim was still sitting, even though it was thus late at night. Caiaphas examined him a great deal concerning both his doctrine and disciples ; but when our Saviour answered, “ That, since he had always taught in the most public manner, in the synagogues and in the temple, he should rather enquire of those who had been his constant hearers,” an officer † standing by, gave him a blow on the face, pretending that he had not used the high priest with respect enough ; to which our Lord only replied, that (a) “ if he had said any thing amiss, the law was open, and he might plead him, but if not, †² he had no cause or authority to strike him.”

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

The council perceiving that, from his own confession, they could raise no accusation against him, called over the false witnesses that they had procured ; but these either disagreed in their stories, or came not sufficiently up to the point. Two persons indeed were consistent in what they deposed, viz. that they had heard him say, “ that he would pull down the temple of God, and in three days rebuild it.” But as this accusation (b) was false in fact, and founded only upon a figurative expression of our Saviour’s, it was not thought to amount to any thing capital.

All this while our Saviour made no manner of reply to the evidences that were produced against him ; whereof when the high priest asked him the reason, and still he continued silent, having one more question in reserve, which, if he answered in the negative, would (according to his notion) make him an impostor, if in the affirmative, a blasphemer, he stood up, and in the “ name of the living God, †³ adjured him to declare whether he was the Messiah, the Son of God, or not ?” The reverence which our Lord paid to that sacred name, made him immediately answer, and that in direct terms, “ That he was ; and that of this they would be convinced, when they should see him sitting on the right-hand of the Almighty, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” Whereupon the high priest, in testimony of his abhorrence, rent his clothes †⁴, as if he had

† Annas (who by Josephus is called Ananus) had been high priest, enjoying that dignity for eleven years ; and, even after he was deposed, retained still the title, and had a great share of the management of all public affairs. When John the Baptist entered upon the exercise of his ministry, he is called the high priest in conjunction with Caiaphas, Luke iii. 2. though at that time he did not act in this character ; and when our Saviour was apprehended, he was first brought to his house, according to St John, ch. xviii. 13, 14. though the other evangelists pass that over in silence, because there was nothing done to him there, and it looks as if he were only there detained until the council met at the house of Caiaphas was ready for him. *Calmet’s Dictionary*, and *Whitby’s Annotations*.

† Some of the ancients are of opinion, that this officer was Malchus, the same person whose ear our Lord had healed in the garden. The more ungrateful he ! And Selden pretends, that in this act he did nothing contrary to the law of his country, which allowed every Israelite, by what they call “ the judgement of zeal,” to avenge upon the spot all public injury done to God or his temple to the nation in general, or the high priest in particular. *De Jure Nat. et Gent. lib. iv. c. 5.*

(a) John xviii. 23.

†² From this defence, which our Saviour makes for

himself, we may learn, that we are not literally to understand his precept “ of turning the other cheek to him that smites us,” since, instead of doing this, we find him endeavouring to vindicate the innocence of his words ; and from hence we may observe likewise, that to stand upon the defence of our own innocence, cannot be contrary to the Christian duties of patience and forgiveness. *Whitby’s Annotations*.

(b) John ii. 19.

†³ The Jews in general, but especially their judges and magistrates, had a custom of conjuring by the name of God, or of exacting an oath of those whose crimes did not sufficiently appear by the evidence of witnesses, or any other means. The person thus interrogated was obliged to speak truth, and in all doubtful cases his confession or denial was decisive, either to acquit or condemn him. *Calmet’s Commentary*.

†⁴ The rending the clothes was a token of indignation, holy zeal, and piety, among the Jews, expressed on several occasions, especially of grief, in humiliation ; and of anger, in hearing any blasphemous speech. This however was forbidden the high priest, not only as to his sacerdotal vestments, but also as to his other garments, Lev. xxi. 10. because he was not to appear before God in the habit of a mourner ; but they, by their traditions, had so qualified that precept, as to allow him to rend his clothes at the bottom,

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heard the grossest blasphemy †, and then, addressing himself to the council, told them, that there was no occasion for any farther witnesses, because what the prisoner had said was palpable blasphemy, and so demanded their opinion; who unanimously agreed, that according to their law he was guilty of death.

With this resolution they repaired to their respective homes, (for now it was late) and left our Lord to the mercy of the soldiers, and the high priest's servants, who offered all the acts of insolence and effrontery that they could invent to his sacred person, whilst some spit on him, others buffeted him, others blind-folded him, and others again, smiting him with their fists. calling on him to prophecy †² "who it was that struck him;" with many more indignities and abominable blasphemies, which must have been greater than all his patience, had his meekness and patience been less than infinite.

During this melancholy scene, Peter, whose fears had made him flee from his Master in the garden, having a little recovered his spirits, and hoping to pass undiscovered in the throng, ventured in, among others, to see the issue of this fatal night, and by the interest of his fellow disciple John, (who went with him) was let in by a maid-servant to the high priest's palace. †³ It was now cold weather; and the servants and officers having kindled a fire in the common hall, Peter went in and sat down among them to warm himself; when the maid who let him in, fixing her eyes upon him, was confident she knew him, and accordingly told the company that he was a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth, which he positively denied to them all, and as he withdrew into the porch heard the cock crow *, but his troubled thoughts took no notice of it.

While he was in the porch another maid charged him with the same thing; but he denied it again, not only with the same confidence, but with the solemnity of an oath; and, about an hour after, when another inferred from his dialect †⁴ that he must necessarily be a Galilean, and a relation of the man whose ear he had cut off, strongly affirmed that he saw him in the garden, this so intimidated him, that, with horrid oaths †⁵ and imprecations upon himself, he denied the matter, till the cock crew the second

though he was permitted to do it from the top to the breast. *Beausobre's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

† From hence we may observe, that the Jews of that age did not think that the Messiah was to be God, but only a man, who could not challenge to himself divinity; seeing they never concluded our Lord to be a blasphemer, because he said he was the Christ, but only because he said he was the Son of God, and thereby made himself equal with God, John v. 18. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†² By this kind of insult they tacitly reproached him with being a false prophet. *Calmet's* Comment.

†³ The Jews themselves allow, as Dr Lightfoot informs us, that there might be frost and snow at the time of the passover; and a common thing it was for great dews to fall then, which would make the air cold until the sun had exhaled them. *Whitby's* Annotations.

* It is reported of St Peter, that ever after, when he heard the cock crow, he wept, remembering the old instrument of his repentance and conversion, and his own unworthiness, for which he never ceased to do acts of sorrow and penance. *Howell's* History, in the Notes.

†⁴ The Galileans spake the same language that the rest of the Jews did; but then they had a certain uncouth accent and manner of expression, which distinguished them from others, and made them

be contemned and ridiculed by the natives of Judea. *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

†⁵ Some of the ancients have taken great pains to extenuate this fault of Peter's. St Ambrose on Luke, and Hillary on Matthew, both assert that the apostle did not lie in saying "I know not the man," but only disguised the truth, renouncing Christ in the quality of a man, but not as the Son of God. But this (according to St Jerom) "is to defend the servant, by accusing the Master of a lie," for if St Peter did not actually deny him, our Lord must have falsely affirmed, "thou shalt deny me thrice." The opinion of those therefore is rather to be embraced, who acknowledge that St Peter, by denying Christ with his mouth, committed a mortal sin, and fell from grace; and as it is certain that by confirming this denial with an oath, and adding horrid execrations to it, his sin was highly aggravated; instead of accounting (as some do) his denial a sin of infirmity, wherein his heart was true though his mouth false, we can hardly think that he could do all this without great checks of his conscience, and that consequently for the present he was in a state of defection, though his bitter weeping and quick repentance, after that Christ had looked upon him, might make an atonement for his transgression. *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Whitby's* Annotations.

time, and our Saviour (who was then in the hall) turning to Peter, gave him such a glance, as reminded him of his prediction, and the foulness of his own crime; whereupon, being stung with compunction, and sadly oppressed with shame and grief, he went out and wept; he wept abundantly, he wept bitterly.

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

Early next morning the Sanhedrim † met again in a full body at their room in the temple, whither they ordered Jesus to be brought; and having again enquired of him, whether he was the true Messiah, and the Son of God, and again received the same answer from him, they adjudged him guilty of blasphemy; and accordingly, having condemned him, carried him to the palace †² of the Roman governor, whose name at that time was Pontius Pilate †³, desiring of him to ratify their sentence, and demanding a warrant †⁴ for his execution.

Judas, in the mean time, watching the issue of these proceedings, and finding that his master was delivered to the secular power, repented of his perfidy, and taking the money which was the reward of his treason, went to the council †⁵ and threw it among them, declaring openly, that he had acted very wickedly in betraying the innocent blood: But (as people that employ such instruments have no regard to what becomes of them) all the comfort that he had from them was, that since it was his own act and deed,

† The assembly which was held the night before, and wherein our Saviour was declared worthy of death, was neither general nor judicial, according to the sense of the law, which did not allow of justice to be administered in private, or in the night-time: And therefore the high priests and rulers met again in the morning, in the council-chamber, in the temple, (which they could not do the night before, because the temple was then always shut), there to re-examine our Saviour, and condemn him in form. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†² At Jerusalem the people shew you, at this time, the palace of Pilate, or rather the place where they say it stood; for now an ordinary Turkish house possesses its room. In this pretended house (which stands not far from St Stephen's gate, and borders on the area of the temple, on the north side) they shew you a room in which Christ was mocked with the ensigns of royalty, and buffeted by the soldiers; and on the other side of the street (which was anciently another part of the palace) is the room where they say our Lord was scourged. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, part i.

†³ It is not certainly known of what family or country this governor was, though it is generally believed that he was of Rome, at least of Italy. He succeeded Gratus in the government of Judea, in which he continued ten years, i. e. from the twelfth to the twenty-second of Tiberius, and is represented by Philo (*de Legatione ad Caium*) as a man of an impetuous and obstinate temper; and a judge who used to sell justice, and for money pronounce any sentence that was desired. The same author makes mention of his rapines, his injuries, his murders, the torments he inflicted upon the innocent, and the persons he put to death without any form of process. In short, he describes him as a man that exercised an excessive cruelty during the whole time of his government, from which he was deposed by Vittelius, the pro-consul of Syria, and sent to Rome to give an account of his conduct to the emperor. But

though Tiberius died before Pilate arrived at Rome, yet his successor Caligula banished him to Vienne in Gaul, where he was reduced to such extremity, that he killed himself with his own hands. The evangelists call him the governor (though properly speaking he was no more than the procurator of Judea), not only because governor was a name of general use, but because Pilate, in effect, acted as one, by taking upon him to judge in criminal matters, as his predecessors had done, and other procurators, in the small provinces of the empire, where there was no proconsul, constantly did. *Calmet's Dictionary* under the word *Pilate*, *Echard's Ecclesiastical History*, lib. ii. c. 2. and *Beausobre's Annotations*.

†⁴ Not that the Romans had, at this time, taken from the Sanhedrim the power of life and death; for, about a year after this, we find the proto-martyr Stephen regularly tried, condemned, and stoned by their sole authority: But therefore the Jewish rulers desired the concurrence of the Roman governor, that they might make our Saviour undergo a more severe and ignominious punishment, than they could have inflicted upon him by their own power, because crucifixion was a death that their law had not prescribed. To this purpose we may observe, that, to induce the governor to comply with their demand, the accusation which they brought against him was of a civil nature, and such as would consign him to the punishment they desired; "we found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar," Luke xxiii. 2. *Universal History*, lib. ii. c. 11. [This was probably their reason for wishing Pilate to judge and condemn him; but it is much more probable that they put St Stephen to death in a tumultuous and illegal manner, than that they should have said to the governor that it was not lawful for them to put any man to death, if both he and they were aware that their right had not been taken from them.]

† Such is the purchase of treason and the reward of covetousness. It is cheap in its offers, momentary in the possession, unsatisfying in its fruition, uncer-

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† it was his business to look to it, not theirs; so that being tortured with the agonies of guilt, and finding no relief any where, he went and hanged himself ||; but in his death there was something so particular, that it made all the inhabitants of Jerusalem take notice of it. The money however, which he threw among the council, the priests thought not proper to put in the treasury, because it was the price of blood †², and therefore they purchased with it a spot of ground, then called the Potter's Field †³, (but afterwards the (a) Field of Blood,) for a place of interment for strangers †⁴.

When the members of the Sanhedrim came to the governor's palace, they refused to go into the (b) judgment-hall, †⁵ for fear of contracting some pollution, and therefore

tain in its stay, sudden in its departure, horrid in the remembrance, and a ruin, a certain and miserable ruin in the event. *Taylor's Life of Christ*, sect. iii.

† As if the crime of the traitor was nothing to those who put him upon the treason; or the condemnation of an innocent person, declared to be such even by the wretch who had betrayed him, was only a matter of sport with them. *Calmet's Commentary*.

|| Though the original word may perhaps mean no more than his falling into a violent suffocating fit of sadness and despair, which might stop all his natural passages, and so, for want of vent, make him burst asunder, and his guts break out at his navel; yet to me the most natural and obvious signification of the word is preferable. The only difficulty is, how to reconcile his hanging of himself with what is elsewhere recorded of him, viz. that "falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out," Acts i. 18. But to this purpose the conjectures of several have been various. Some think, that he hanged himself on a tree, but that, the branch yielding and bending to the ground, he was not, at that time, strangled, but afterwards fell into a dropsy, of which he burst and died. Others imagine, that he threw himself from some place higher than that on which he intended to hang himself, and that by the force of the swing when he cast himself off, the rope broke, so that he fell to the ground and burst. Others suppose, that as he might hang himself in some private place, he probably there continued until his belly swelled, (as it commonly happens to such as die in that manner), and in a short time his bowels burst out: and for this they have the authority of some copies, which instead of *περὶν γερόμενος*, falling down headlong, have *ἀπογεγάμμενος*, thus hanging, he burst asunder and all his bowels gushed out. But in whatever manner this came to pass, I cannot see why, in this extraordinary instance, we may not admit of a more than ordinary Providence, to make the death of this traitor more remarkable. *Le Scene's Essay*, part ii. c. vii. *Calmet's Commentary*, *Hammond's* and *Whitby's Annotations*.

†² It was a custom among the Jews, which was afterwards imitated by the first Christians, that it should not be lawful for executioners to offer any thing, or for any alms to be received from them; and so by analogy, any money with which a life was bought was not to be put into the treasury. *Hammond's Annotations*.

†³ The valley of Jehoshaphat runs cross the mouth of another valley, called the valley of Hinnom, lying

at the bottom of mount Sion. On the west side of this valley is the place called the Potter's Field, where not improbably the people of that trade were used to dry their pots before they baked them. It was afterwards called the Field of Blood, for the reason that the evangelist assigns; but at present, from that veneration which it has obtained amongst Christians, it is named Campo Sancto, or the Holy Field. It is a small plat of ground not above thirty yards long, and about half as much broad; and one moiety of it is taken up by a square fabric about twelve yards high, built for a charnal-house, and covered over with a vault, in which are some openings to let down the bodies that are to be buried there. The earth must certainly be impregnated with a very corrosive salt, if what some tell us be true, viz. that it can dissolve a body in the space of four and twenty hours. Those, however, who have looked down through these openings tell us, that they could see many bodies under several degrees of decay, from whence they conjectured, that this grave does not make such quick dispatch with the corpses committed to it as is commonly reported. The Armenians have the command of this burying place, for which they pay to the Turks the rent of a sequin a-day: and a little below the Campo Sancto is shewn an intricate cave, or a sepulchre consisting of several rooms, one within another, in which the apostles are said to have hid themselves when they forsook their Master and fled. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, part 1.

(a) Acts i. 19.

†⁴ The strangers here meant may be either men of other nations with whom the Jews would have no commerce, even when they were dead, and therefore provided a separate burying-place for them; or they might be Jews, who coming from far to Jerusalem to sacrifice, died there before their return home, and so the priests provided a burying place for them. *Hammond's Annotations*.

(b) John xviii. 28.

† Because in the governor's palace there was a guard of Roman soldiers, and a great company of servants, and, as they were heathens, they thought, that by touching any of them they should be defiled, and consequently made incapable of eating the passover, of which no unclean person was to partake. By the passover, however, here in St John, ch. xviii. 28. we are not to understand the paschal lamb, which the rest of the Jews, as well as our Saviour, had eaten the night before, but the *Chagigah*, or *peace-offering*, i. e. the sheep and oxen that were offered all the

Pilate went out to them; and as he understood that they had already passed sentence upon him, he demanded the grounds of their accusation against him: But, being unwilling that any enquiry should be made into the particulars of their proceedings, they answered in general, that † “if he were not a criminal, they would not have brought him to him.” Imagining, therefore, that the prosecution was about some matters relating to their religion, the governor desired they would take him, and judge him according to their own law; but to this they replied, †² “that it was not permitted them to put any man to death.”

From Matth. xx. 10 to the end, Mark xi. 15 to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

By these reserved answers, Pilate, perceiving that their intention was to make him the instrument of their malice against an innocent man, refused to intermeddle in the affair, unless they would exhibit some articles of accusation against him. Knowing

seven days of the feast, and are expressly called the passover, Luke xxii. 1. Thus the Jewish doctors remark upon Deut. xvi. 2. “Thou shalt sacrifice the passover to the Lord, of the flock, and of the herd,” that the flock signifies the lambs, which were eaten on the 14th, and the herd, the offerings of the Chagigah, which were consumed on the 15th day of the month Nisan. The Jewish rulers therefore would not go into the judgment hall, that they might not be unfit to eat the passover, i. e. those paschal offerings of the herd, which were holy things, and of which none might eat in their defilement. *Whitby's Annotations and Appendix to St Mark. Vid. Calmet's Commentary upon this passage of St John, where he opposes this opinion with reasons that seem to have some weight in them.*

† By this answer they seem willing to make Pilate, not so much a judge of the cause, as an executor of their sentence: But there cannot possibly be an higher act of injustice, than to desire, that a judge should suppose the accused person guilty of the crime without any farther examination. It is no strange and extraordinary thing to see innocent persons oppressed by arbitrary proceedings without any legal process; but for a man to be brought before a judge, in order to be delivered up directly to execution, without any proof of his crime, or any examination concerning it, is a new way of oppression, first invented and contrived against the Saviour of the world. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†² Whether the Jews had at this time the power of life and death is a point much controverted among the learned. The answer which the Jewish rulers here give to Pilate, and the general opinion of their rabbins, who suppose that their rulers lost that power about forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem, seem to incline to the negative; but those who take the other side of the question argue thus,—That the Jews, when reduced to a Roman province, had still the privilege granted them, “to use the sacred institutions and customs that were derived to them from their fathers.” Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiv. c. 17.; that it was granted to Hyrcanus, the high priest, if any controversy should arise concerning their discipline, that the judgment of it should be referred to him; that, pursuant to this grant, we find the high priest and his council stoning Stephen, not by the rage of zealots, as some conceive, but according to the law, which requires that the blasphemer should be stoned, Levit.

xxiv. 16.; that Saul, armed with the power of the high priest and elders, persecuted the Jewish Christians unto death, and led them bound to Jerusalem to be punished, Acts xxii. 4, 5.; that the Jews would have judged Paul after their own law, Acts xxiv. 6. and have put him to death, Acts xxiii. 27. had not Lysias, the chief captain, rescued him from their hands, which they say he did by violence, i. e. by an invasion of their rights, but he affirms he did it, because he understood that Paul was a Roman: And from hence they conclude, that they still retained the power of judging, and condemning those to death, who were Jews by nature and descent, and by their laws deserved to die, though, as to some persons, and in some cases, they had not that power. Thus, when Annas, or Ananas, the high priest, killed James, the brother of our Lord, and stoned many other Christians as transgressors of the law, the wisest part of the nation (says Josephus) disliked his proceedings, because he should not have called a council concerning life and death, without licence from Albinus, the Roman president. From whence we may infer, that the power of inflicting capital punishments, even upon the Jews converted to the Christian faith, was then so far taken from them, that they could not regularly do it, without first obtaining leave from the Roman governor: And in the case of our Blessed Saviour, the Jews had debarred themselves from the power of putting him to death, after they had accused him before Pilate, not of crimes committed against their law, but of sedition, and aspiring at a kingdom, to the prejudice of Cæsar and the Roman government, whereof it belonged to Pilate, and not to them, to judge and determine. And therefore their saying to him, “It is not lawful for us to put any man to death,” John xviii. 31. is looked upon, either as a kind of complaint of the encroachments which the Romans had made upon their civil constitution, or as a mere pretence, since Pilate gave them power enough, when he bade them “take him, and judge him according to their law:” and that the true reasons of their bringing him before the Roman tribunal were, that he might be condemned for sedition, which would be a means to secure them from the rage of the people, and that he might be crucified, which was a Roman death, and generally inflicted on those that were found tampering against the government. *Calmet's Commentary, Whitby's and Beausobre's Annotations.*

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therefore that Pilate was a creature of the Roman court, and a slave to its greatness, they alleged against our Lord,—That † he was guilty of seditious practices, of dissuading the payment of the tribute to Cæsar, and of setting himself up for a king. Pilate hearing the name of a king, thought himself concerned to examine that point; and therefore, returning to the judgment-hall, and seating himself upon the tribunal, he asked Jesus whether he was the king of the Jews? Which our Lord never pretended to deny; but then he informed the governor, that † “his kingdom was not of this world,” and could therefore give no umbrage to the Romans; for that, had it been a worldly kingdom, his subjects and followers would have certainly fought for him, and saved him from the hands of the Jews. When Pilate heard that he disclaimed all right to secular kingdoms, he thought he had nothing to do to examine him about the nature of his spiritual empire; and therefore, withdrawing from the court into the vestibulum (where his accusers were impatiently expecting the ratification of their sentence, in order to execution), contrary to their hopes, he plainly told them, that he found “nothing worthy of death in him.”

Upon this disappointment, the chief priests and elders grew exceedingly fierce and clamorous, representing our Lord as a turbulent mover of the people, and charging him with the spreading of seditious principles through all †² Galilee and Judea, even as far as Jerusalem. Pilate, hearing them name Galilee, and understanding that he was a Galilean, and, consequently, belonged to †³ Herod’s jurisdiction; in order to get rid of the importunity of the Jews, and withal to free himself from this odious and puzzling affair, sent him immediately to Herod, who was then at Jerusalem upon the occasion of the feast. Herod was no less proud of the honour done him by Pilate, than glad of having this opportunity to gratify his curiosity. For, having heard much of our Saviour’s fame, he expected to see some miracle or other done by him, but found himself sadly disappointed: For though the scribes and rulers pursued him with their accusations to Herod’s palace, and Herod, in hearing the cause, asked him several questions, yet he would not vouchsafe so much as one answer; which made the tetrarch look upon him as an insignificant, despicable person; and, accordingly, having committed him to the derision and insults of his guards, who used him with the utmost indignity, he sent him back again to Pilate, arrayed in a white robe †⁴; whether it was to make a

† When our Lord’s accusers came before Pilate, they said nothing of his pretended blasphemy, his destruction of the temple, or violation of the law of Moses, because they were questions that the governor, they knew, would not concern himself with; and therefore they forged such accusations against him, as they thought might make him odious and suspected to the Roman government, and oblige Pilate to be severe against him. *Calmet’s Commentary.*

† Not of human original, but from heaven, and so meddled not with the affairs of this world; that it had none of the pomp and splendour of the world annexed to it; none to fight for it with carnal weapons, and exercised no dominion over mens bodies, but over their souls only; that its regiment was spiritual, and its judicatories the courts of conscience; its tribute a conformity to the great laws of faith, hope, and charity; and its only imposts, the duties of an holy spirit, and the expresses of a religious worship, a resigned will, and a consenting understanding, in which Pilate soon perceived that the interest of Cæsar could not be invaded. *Whitby’s Annotations, and Taylor’s Life of Christ, part iii. sect. 15.*

†³ Here they artfully make mention of Galilee, to

incite Pilate against him as a seditious person, and to confirm their own suggestion that he was so; for they give him to think, that as he was a Galilean he might probably embrace the opinion of Judas Gaulonites, who held it was not lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar; a notion which the inhabitants of Galilee had generally imbibed, and upon that account were always prone to sedition and rebellion, for which some of them, not long before, had been set upon and slain by Pilate. *Whitby’s Annotations.*

†³ Pilate’s government did not extend to Galilee; it included Judea only. Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great, was at this time king or tetrarch of Galilee; Jesus consequently was his subject; and therefore, according to the Roman laws, it was Pilate’s duty to send him to his proper sovereign, especially as he was accused of rebellion; and a design to make himself a king. *Calmet’s Commentary, and Grotius on Luke xxiii.*

†⁴ The original words mean properly a *splendid robe*, and do not relate so much to the colour as the richness of the habit. *Calmet’s Commentary.*

[In this place the original word certainly means either *scarlet* or *purple*. The word used by St John

mock of him, or to indicate his innocence, or both, but so it was, that from that time Herod and Pilate († who before were at great variance) were, upon this occasion, perfectly reconciled.

When our Lord was remanded back in this manner, Pilate addressed himself to the priests and rulers of the people, telling them,—“ That, though they had brought this man before him as a seditious person, and a seducer of the people, yet, upon examination, he could not find him guilty of any of the crimes that were laid to his charge; that this was not his own opinion only, but that Herod (who was a more competent judge of the affair, and to whom he had sent him, on purpose to take cognizance of it) had nowise signified that his crimes were capital; and therefore, instead of taking away his life, he proposed some lesser punishment, if they thought fit, such as †² scourging him a little with whips, and so dismissing him:” but this lenity was so disagreeable to their enraged temper, that they peremptorily demanded execution, saying, “ Crucify him, crucify him.” Pilate, still tender of shedding innocent blood, expostulated the matter with them, desiring to know what “ evil he had done;” for, as for his part, he could find no fault in him, much less any crimes deserving of death; but this did but the more exasperate, and make them more clamorous for speedy execution.

The governor had one expedient more, which he thought would not fail him. Every Passover †³ he was obliged by a certain custom to pardon one criminal whom the Jews should nominate, and therefore when the people came, and were urgent with him to grant them that usual favour, he proposed two persons to them, Barabbas, a notorious malefactor, who, in an insurrection with some other seditious persons, had committed murder, and Jesus, who was called Christ; never doubting but that the populace, who, he knew, were better inclined to our Lord than their rulers, would have preferred an innocent man before a thief and a murderer: But at the instigation of their priests, and others in authority, they required that the favour might be granted to Barabbas. Hereupon, when the governor desired to know what he was to do with the person whom they called Christ, they, one and all, cried out, “ Crucify him, crucify him;” and as he still insisted on his innocence, and proposed some lighter punishment, (which was all, to be sure, that he could deserve) they began to redouble their clamours, and in the most tumultuous manner imaginable demanded that he might be crucified.

The governor, in the mean time, received a message from his wife †⁴, desiring him

can mean nothing else than purple; and as purple was then the royal colour, and as the guards of Herod meant not to declare either the *innocence* or *guilt* of Jesus, but merely to expose to derision his claim to regal dignity, they certainly arrayed him in a royal robe.]

† It is generally thought, that the cause of this difference between them was the massacre that Pilate made of some Galileans at Jerusalem, in the time of the passover, Luke xiii. 1. which Herod resented as an indignity put upon him, and an invasion of his authority, who was at that time tetrarch of Galilee. *Beausobre's* Annotations.

†² This chastisement (as Pilate calls it) was not in order to his crucifixion, and therefore was not that punishment which the Romans used to inflict upon malefactors, as a preparative to their execution, for Pilate intended it as a means to procure his release; and therefore he seemed willing to consent to it as a punishment which the Jews so commonly inflicted upon those who had acted perversely against their law and their traditions, that he might exempt him from that sentence which they were so urgent with him to

pronounce. But the result of this his compliance was, that he neither saved our Lord, nor preserved justice. Instead of one punishment, the innocent was made to suffer two, being at last both scourged and crucified. *Whitby's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

†³ As the feast of the passover was celebrated by the Jews in memory of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, it was very agreeable to the nature of that feast, and therefore customary at that time (though practised on no other festivals) to make this release. It is observed, however, that this practice was no custom of the Jews, even when they had the civil administration in their hands, but a piece of popularity, or favour of the procurator, first brought in by Pilate, and afterwards continued by some Christian emperors, who, by a general law, commanded the judges, that, on the first day of the passover, all Jewish prisoners, except such as were committed for particular crimes, should be discharged. *Whitby's* and *Hammond's* Annotations.

†⁴ From the time of Tiberius, the governors of provinces were allowed to take their wives along with

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by no means to condemn the innocent person that was then before him, because, upon his account, she had had that night many frightful and uneasy dreams, which made him the more earnest to release him, or at least to spare his life; and therefore, in hopes of pacifying the people's rage, he ordered him to be scourged. The soldiers, who were to do this, thinking it not enough to execute his orders, took him into the common hall, where, stripping him of his own clothes, they put a loose purple coat about him for a robe, a wreath of thorns upon his head for a crown, and a reed in his hand for a sceptre; and then, in derision, saluted him, and, bowing their knees, mocked him with the sham profession of allegiance. After this they spit in his face, smote him on the cheek, and (to make his crown of thorns pierce the deeper) struck him on the head with his phantastic sceptre; and then leading him to a pillar, (where they tied him fast) they scourged him with whips, and with such unrelenting cruelty, that his tender flesh was torn in pieces, and the pavement crimsoned with his most precious blood.

In this piteous plight, with his head, face, and body imbrued in blood, and with all his mock ornaments on, Pilate, in hopes of moving the people's compassion, ordered him to be brought forth; and when he appeared, "See the man!" (says he) this rueful spectacle of suffering innocence!" But so far were they from melting at the sight of so deplorable an object, that they raised their cries still louder and louder for his crucifixion; and when the governor still insisted on his innocence, (a) "We have a law †, (said they) and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God."

These last words raised some terror in Pilate, and gave him more uneasiness: For taking them in such a sense as an heathen might well put upon them, he began to apprehend, that if he should proceed to sentence against him, he might destroy, not only an innocent person, but possibly some hero or mighty demi-god, and so at once commit an act of injustice and impiety both. He therefore, returning with Jesus to the judgement-seat again, began to enquire into his original and pedigree: But as it was no part of our Saviour's intention to escape death, he thought it not proper to say any thing in his own justification; until his silence having given the governor some offence, (insomuch that he put him in mind that his life or death, his release or crucifixion, depended upon him), he then replied, that such power he could not have over him, "were it not permitted him from above; and that therefore they who had delivered him up, had the greater sin †² to answer for than he.

This reply made Pilate still the more desirous to release him, which when the Jews perceived, they found out at last this expedient to work upon his fears, by telling him

them, which was a privilege not granted them before. This wife of Pilate's, according to the general tradition, was named Claudia Procula; and, in relation to her dream, some are of opinion, that as she had intelligence of our Lord's apprehension, and knew by his character that he was a righteous person, her imagination being struck with these ideas, did naturally produce the dream we read of. But as our Saviour was apprehended about midnight, out of the city, and without Pilate's privacy, and detained in the house of Annas until it was day, there was no possibility for her having any notice of it before she went to sleep; and therefore we have the juster reason to believe, that this dream was sent providentially upon her, for the clearer manifestation of our Lord's innocence. *Calmet's Commentary.*

(a) John xix. 7.

† When the Jews perceived that Pilate looked upon the accusations which they brought against Jesus,

of his being a seditious person, and one who aimed at a kingdom, as idle suggestions, and what had no shadow of probability in them, they had recourse to another allegation, viz. his being a violater of the laws of their nation, and guilty of blasphemy, which (as they were allowed to be governed by their own law) they had a right to demand of their governor to see punished, and accordingly did it with arrogance enough. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†^a Pilate indeed sinned heinously in abusing his power to the condemnation of the innocent: But Judas sinned more in delivering him up to the chief priests; and the chief priests in delivering him up to Pilate, than Pilate himself, whom they made a tool to serve their malice and revenge. They had better means of knowledge than he, and so sinned against more light, and consequently their guilt was greater, and their condemnation heavier than his. *Beausobre's Annotations.*

plainly, "that if he did not punish a man, who set himself up for a king, he was an enemy to the emperor;" a menace which he, * who knew the jealous temper of his master Tiberius full well, and how easily a wrong representation of these proceedings might prove his ruin, had not the courage to withstand; and therefore, returning to the hall, he ordered Jesus to be brought, in the same habit, to his public tribunal, which stood in a paved place, called Gabbatha †, and before he gave sentence, calling for water, and washing his hands *² before all the people, he solemnly declared, that he was "innocent of the blood of that just man, and that they must answer for it;" whereupon the whole body of the people cried out, "May his blood fall upon us and our posterity!" An imprecation as black as hell, and what has been too long (may it please the Almighty to shorten their punishment!) verified upon them.

Barabbas being thus released, and Jesus condemned to the cross, the soldiers and officers, after they had acted over again their former insults and indignities, took off the purple coat, and put his own garments on him, and having laid an heavy cross upon his †²

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xiv. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

* This threat seems to be the reason why Pilate (as he is quoted by several of the ancient fathers) sent an account of our Saviour and his crucifixion to the emperor Tiberius, in order to clear himself from so unjust a deed, and to throw the odium of it upon the Jewish Sanhedrim. For as it was customary for all governors to send an account of the most memorable transactions that happened in the time of their administration, the crucifixion of a person of our Saviour's character was of too signal a nature not to be transmitted to Rome: And accordingly the substance of what is contained in the acts of Pilate (as they are called) relating to this matter, may be comprised in such words as these:

Pilate to Tiberius, &c.

"I have been forced to consent at length to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, to prevent a tumult among the Jews, though it was very much against my will: For the world never saw, and probably never will see, a man of such extraordinary piety and uprightness. But the high priests and Sanhedrim fulfilled in it the oracles of their prophets and of their sybils. Whilst he hung on the cross, an horrid darkness, which covered the earth, seemed to threaten its final end. His followers, who pretend to have seen him rise from the dead and ascend into heaven, and acknowledge him for their God, do still subsist, and, by their excellent lives, shew themselves the worthy disciples of so extraordinary a Master. I did what I could to save him from the malice of the Jews, but the fear of a total insurrection made me sacrifice him to the peace and interest of your empire, &c." *Universal History.*

† The word Gabbatha, in the Syriac, (for that is the language which was then commonly spoken, and which the writers of the New Testament do therefore call the Hebrew) signifies an *elevation*; and therefore the place where Pilate had his tribunal erected, was probably a terras, a gallery, or balcony belonging to his palace, and paved with stone or marble, as the word *λιθόστρωτος* imports.

*² Washing of hands, with a design to denote innocence, was not peculiar only to the Jews, but customary among other nations, because by the element

of water it is natural to signify purity and cleanness; but then the question is, whether, in conformity to the Jews or Gentiles, it was, that Pilate made use of this ceremony? To expiate an unknown murder, the elders of the next adjacent city were wont "to wash their hands and say, Our hands have not shed this blood," Deut. xxi. 6, 7. And the Psalmist having renounced all confederacy with wicked and mischievous men, makes this resolution, "I will wash my hands in testimony of my innocency," Psal. xxvi. 6. From which passages Origen is of opinion, that Pilate did this in compliance with the manners of the Jews, that by actions as well as words he might declare to them the opinion he had of our Lord's innocence. But as Pilate was a Roman, others are rather inclined to think, that in this action he conformed himself to the manners of the Gentiles. The scholiast upon Sophocles (in *Ajace*) informs us, that it was the custom among the ancients, when they had killed a man or shed blood, to wash their hands in water, thereby to purify them from their defilement; and to the same purpose Virgil introduces *Aeneas* speaking:

Me, bello è tanto digressum, et cæde recenti,
Attrectare nefas; donec me flumine vivo
Abluero. *Æneid.* ii. ver. 718.

Nay, Clemens Romanus informs us, (lib. ii. c. 52.) that when judges were going to pronounce sentence of death, they usually lifted up their hands to heaven, thereby to denote their own innocency; and it is not improbable that they washed their hands before they did so, that they might lift them up with the more purity. *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

†² It was a custom, that he who was to be crucified should bear his own cross to the place of execution: But whereas it is generally supposed, that our Lord bore the whole cross, i. e. the long and transverse part both, this seems to be a thing impossible; and therefore Lipsius, in his treatise (*de Supplicio Crucis*) has set the matter in a true light, when he tells us, that Jesus only carried the transverse beam, because the long piece of timber or body of the cross was either fixed in the ground before, or made ready to be set up as soon as the prisoner came; and from

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shoulders, led him away to his crucifixion †: But when they came to the gate of the city, his strength was so entirely exhausted, that he was not able to stand under it any longer; and therefore they compelled one Simon, †² a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear it the rest of the way.

Among the vast throngs that followed to this execution, there were many people (especially some pious women) who could not behold this sad spectacle without the highest grief and lamentation; which when our Saviour observed, lifting up his face, all bloody and disfigured, "Weep not for me, said he, but weep for yourselves and your children; for it will not be long before those shall be accounted happy, who shall have no posterity * to inherit the miseries that shall then come upon this nation: For how dismal must their condition be, who shall call on the †³ hills to cover them, and the mountains

hence he observes, that painters are very much mistaken in their description of our Saviour carrying the whole cross.

† A death, the most dreadful of all others, both for the shame and the pain of it. So scandalous, that it was inflicted, as the last mark of detestation, upon the vilest of people. It was the punishment of robbers and murderers, provided that they were slaves too; but otherwise, if they were free, and had the privileges of the city of Rome, this was then thought a prostitution of that honour, and too infamous a punishment for such an one, let his crimes have been what they would. The form of a cross was that of two posts, cutting one another at right angles. On that which stood upright the body was fastened, by nailing the feet to it, and on the other transverse piece, by nailing the hands on each side. Now, because these parts of the body, being the instruments of action and motion, are provided by nature with a much greater quantity of nerves than others have occasion for; and because all sensation is performed by the spirits contained in the nerves, it will follow, that wherever they abound, the sense of pain must needs, in proportion, be more quick and tender. But though the pain of this kind of death was exceedingly sharp, yet as none of the vitals were immediately affected, the body continued thus stretched out and hanging upon the nails that fastened it to the cross, until excess of anguish had, by degrees, quite exhausted the spirits and driven out the soul, which must needs make the death which our Saviour submitted to for our sakes slow and lingering, as well as painful and ignominious: So lingering, that St Andrew was two whole days upon the cross, and some other martyrs have been rather starved and devoured by birds, than killed with the torments of the tree. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. ii. and *Howell's History* in the Notes.

†² Libya, in its proper acceptation, denotes those parts of the African continent which lie about the Mediterranean Sea, from Egypt eastward to the greater Syrtis, or gulf of Sidra, westward. In the western part of this Libya stood Cyrene, a city of great note, and once of such power, as to contend with Carthage for some pre-eminences: But whether this Simon, whom the soldiers compelled to carry our Saviour's cross, was a Jew or Pagan, is a question that has been disputed among the ancients. Several

fathers have thought that he was a Gentile, and that herein he was a type of that idolatrous people, who were afterwards to be called to the profession of the Gospel, and to carry the cross after Christ. But others, from his name, rather imagine that he was a Jew, and that, as there were great numbers of that nation in Egypt and the neighbouring countries, this Simon might be one whose habitation was at Cyrene in Libya, but was now coming up to Jerusalem at the time of the passover. He is called by St Mark, chap. xv. 21. the father of Alexander and Rufus, because these two persons were become famous in the Christian church at the time when this evangelist wrote his Gospel; but whether he himself was, at this time, a disciple of Christ, and afterwards Bishop of Bostres in Arabia, where he suffered martyrdom, by being burnt alive by the Pagans, is much to be questioned, though some have asserted it, but not, I fear, from sufficient authority. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, part i. and *Calmet's Commentary and Dictionary* under the word *Simon*.

* This they undoubtedly had occasion to think at the siege of Jerusalem, and during the war against the Romans, not only on account of the loss of their children, and the sale of them, who were under seventeen, for bond slaves; but chiefly on the account of that famine in Jerusalem, which forced Mary, the daughter of Eleazar, a woman of some figure and quality, to eat her own sucking child: Upon which (says Josephus) "the dread of famine made men weary of their lives, and the living envied the dead that were taken away before the extremity came to this height." *De Bello Jud.* lib. vii. c. 8.

†³ That this is a proverbial expression, which the prophet Hosea, chap. x. 8. makes use of, to denote the utter despair of a people, when they see unavoidable calamities coming upon them, cannot be doubted; for so the Targum upon Hosea explains it, "He will bring such judgments upon them as will render their condition as miserable as if the mountains should cover them, and the hills fall upon them." Isaiah speaks of the wicked, that "they should go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord," Isa. ii. 19. And accordingly Josephus relates of the Jews, that after the taking of Jerusalem, many of them hid themselves in vaults and sepulchres, and there perished, rather than surrender to the Romans. *De Bello*, *ibid.*

to fall on them, that by a sudden destruction they may escape the lingering calamities of famine and fear, and the horror of a thousand deaths."

When he came to the place of execution, which was called Golgotha, † or Mount Calvary, the soldiers, before they nailed him to the cross, offered him a potion ‡ of wine mixed with gall, which, when he had tasted it, he refused to drink. They then stripped off his clothes; and having, with four great nails, fastened his hands and feet, with his body stretched out, to the cross; they so raised it up, and fixed it in the ground. To stain his innocence, and to put him to the greater shame, they crucified him between two common malefactors; †² but what might make an amends for that, was the inscription which Pilate ordered to be fixed on the top of his cross, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS, in the three most general languages, †³ Hebrew, Greek, and

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

† Golgotha in the Syriac (vulgarly called the Hebrew tongue) signifies the same that Calvary does in Latin, and was so called, either because the form of the Mount did somewhat resemble a man's skull, or rather because it being the common place of execution, a great number of dead mens skulls was usually to be seen there. It is a small eminency or hill, upon the greater Mount of Moriah; and as it was anciently appropriated to the execution of malefactors, it was therefore shut out of the walls of the city, as an execrable and polluted place; but since it was made the altar, on which was offered up the precious and all-sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, it has recovered itself from that infamy, and has always been revered and resorted to by Christians, with such devotion, as has drawn the city round about it; so that it stands now in the midst of Jerusalem, and a great part of the hill of Sion is shut out of the walls, to make room for the admission of Mount Calvary: And this the rather, because it was a tradition, generally received by the primitive Christians, that the first as well as the second Adam was buried here, and that this was the place where Abraham was about to have offered his son Isaac, the type of our Blessed Lord. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, part i.

‡ Interpreters and others vary very much about this passage, taking it two different ways, as St Matthew, chap. xxvii. 34. and St Mark, chap. xv. 23. seem to express it. Some will have it, that in St Matthew's sense, "vinegar mingled with gall" was a bitter poisonous draught, to stupify the person who drank it, that by benumbing his senses he might feel less pain. Those that differ from this, say, that by the piety of some of the disciples, and not improbably of some of those good women who used to minister to Jesus, there was prepared "wine mingled with myrrh," which, according to Pliny, was an excellent and pleasant mixture, and such as the piety and indulgence of these nations used to administer to condemned persons, to fortify their drooping spirits against the terrors of approaching death. As the design of this mixture however was, in some measure, to intoxicate the sufferer, and to make him less sensible of his pain, our Blessed Lord might therefore refuse to drink it, because it became him, who was then going to offer himself a free and voluntary sacrifice to God for the sins of men, and was to shew them a pattern how to bear afflictions with due resignation

to the Divine will, to avoid a thing which might too far discompose his thoughts, and shew too ill a precedent to his followers. To reconcile the difference then between the two evangelists, since the former affirms, that the potion offered to our Saviour was vinegar mingled with gall, the latter, wine mingled with myrrh; the easiest way is to say (with our learned Dr Lightfoot), that there were two cups offered to our Lord at the time of his passion; one of wine mixed with myrrh, by some of his friends, before he was nailed to the cross, and the other of vinegar by the soldiers, in a scoffing and insulting manner, after he was nailed to the cross; which is better than to assert, with some great names, that the ancient translator of St Matthew from the Hebrew or Syriac, mistaking the word *marra*, which properly signifies *bitterness*, might put *gall* (which in Syriac is *marar*, and derived from the same root) instead of *myrrh*. *Howell's History in the Notes*, *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

†² The malefactors here mentioned were probably some of those factious and seditious gangs which Judea, at this time, was full of. Under pretence of public liberty, they committed all manner of violence and outrage; and, stirring up the people against the Roman government, drew upon the nation all the calamity which afterwards befel it. As it was customary to crucify several malefactors at the same time, especially if convicted of the same crimes, our Saviour, who was accused by the Jews of seditious practices, had two, who were really guilty of that crime, executed with him, and him they placed in the midst, as in the most honourable place, purely in derision, and with the same malevolent spirit that made them array him in a purple robe, a sceptre, and a crown. *Beausobre's Annotations*.

†³ In Hebrew, or the Syriac, which was then the common language of the country; in Greek, which was the language of commerce almost all the east over; and Latin, because of the majesty of the Roman empire, which, at that time, had extended its dominion over the then known world. The whole inscription, however, is said to have been written after the Jewish manner, i. e. from the right hand to the left, that it might be more legible to the Jews, who, by conversing with the Romans, began now to understand a little Latin. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Howell's History in the Notes*.

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Latin, then in vogue. This the high priest would gladly have had him alter; but, either out of spite to them who had forced him upon an unjust act, or out of honour to our Lord, whom he knew to be a righteous person, he positively refused to do it.

As soon as our Lord was fixed on the cross, (which was much about noon) the four soldiers, who were his executioners, went to dividing the poor spoil of his garments. His mantle they cut into four parts, and took each of them one; but as for his coat, because it was one entire piece, † wove without seam, and would therefore be spoiled if it were divided, for it they cast lots, and therein fulfilled a famous prophecy (a).

While he thus hung upon the cross in the most exquisite torments, several people of different denominations, the chief priests, rulers, and soldiers, most of the multitude, and almost every common passenger, insulted his misery; presuming, that a person reduced to that low estate, could never be the promised Messiah: But all the reply that he made to their bitter and reviling speeches, was only by way of petition to his heavenly Father, that in respect of their ignorance and confirmed prejudice against him, he would be pleased to overlook their barbarous treatment of him, and to pardon their provoking blasphemies.

Nay, of the two malefactors who were crucified with him ‖, one of them reviled and mocked him in the same gross manner, requiring him to give the company (as they desired) a demonstration of his being the true Messiah, by rescuing both himself and them from the crosses whereon they were fixed: But the other malefactor †² reproved his companion for insulting the innocent, and while himself was receiving the just reward of his crimes, for upbraiding a person who suffered undeservedly; and then looking upon Jesus with a noble reliance, and most wonderful faith, he humbly intreated him to retain some remembrance of him when he came into his kingdom; to which our Lord

† Some of the fathers are of opinion, that this coat of our Saviour's was made of two pieces of woollen stuff, wove in a loom, and so fine drawn, that the joining could not be perceived. Others will have it, that it was all needle-work, i. e. knit, not wove from top to bottom. But Braunius, in his treatise, "*De Vestitu Sacerdotum Hebræorum*," has plainly proved, that the ancients had the art of weaving any habit, of what make or size soever, all of one piece, in a loom; that in several eastern countries, the art is still preserved and practised; and that himself made a machine, (which Calmet, in his Dictionary under the word *Vestments*, has given us), wherein such an habit might be wrought. As it was customary formerly for women to weave stuffs and cloth, not for their own wearing only, but for their husbands and childrens use, (for so the character of the virtuous woman in Solomon, Prov. xxxi. 13. and the practice of Penelope the wife of Ulysses, shew), it was the ancient tradition, that the Blessed Virgin herself wove her son's coat; but that she made it for him when he was young; that it grew with him as he increased in stature; and continued always fresh without decay, is a mere fiction, in order to assimilate it to the habits which the Israelites wore in the wilderness. Nor can it be easily credited, that the holy coat, which is kept in the cathedral church at Treves, is the very same that our Saviour had on before his crucifixion. *Calmet's Commentary and Dictionary*.

(a) Psal. xxii. 18.

‖ If we compare Matth. xxvii. 44. (where it is said, "that the thieves, who were crucified with Jesus, cast the same in his teeth,") with what we find in

Luke xxiii. 39. (where it is said, "one of the malefactors, that was hanged, railed on him,") we may be apt to fancy some contradiction in the evangelists: But this the commentators reconcile, by shewing, that it is a very common thing in the Hebrew style, to use the plural number instead of the singular: As when it is said, that the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat, Gen. viii. 4. i. e. on one of the mountains; and "that God overthrew the cities where Lot dwelt," Gen. xix. 29. when he could only dwell in one at a time; with several other examples both in the Old and New Testament. But I see no reason why we may not understand this passage, as St Chrysostom and St Jerom have done, viz. "That both of the thieves did, at first, rail on Jesus, probably thinking, by that artifice to obtain some help towards procuring their pardon; but being disappointed of their hopes, and hearing Jesus pray for his crucifiers, one of them was thereby prevailed upon, and converted;" especially since, according to this interpretation, the operations of God's grace upon this man's mind were more sudden and strong, and his conversion more miraculous. *Whitby's and Hammond's Annotations*, and *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. ii.

†² This thief is called by some authors Dimas, or Dismus, and, out of the false Gospel of Nicodemus, they produce many fables concerning him, but too absurd to be here related. Several of the fathers however give him the title of a martyr, because of the testimony which he bore to truth, even when it seemed to be utterly deserted by every one else: *Calmet's Commentary*.

returned him this most gracious promise of speedy felicity †, "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

In the mean time, there stood by our Saviour's cross, sad spectators of this dismal tragedy, the Holy Virgin-Mother, Mary the wife of Alphæus †², Mary Magdalene, and John his beloved apostle; to whose care and protection he recommended his sorrowful mother †³, and from that time forward he took her to his house, and all along paid her the respect due to a parent.

From Matth. xv. 10. to the end, Mark. xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end

† The word *paradise* comes from the Hebrew, or rather from the Chaldee, *pardes*; and according to the force of the original it should properly signify an orchard, or plantation of fruit trees, as in some passages of the Old Testament, particularly in Neh. ii. 8. it denotes a forest. The Septuagint make use of the word *παράδεισος*, when they speak of the garden of Eden, which the Lord planted in the beginning of the world, and therein placed our first parents. The Jews commonly call paradise the garden of Eden, and they imagine that at the coming of the Messiah they shall there enjoy an earthly felicity, in the midst of all sorts of delights, and till the resurrection and the coming of the Messiah, they think their souls shall abide here in a state of rest. In the books of the New Testament the word paradise is put for a place of delight, where the souls of the blessed enjoy everlasting happiness; but where our Lord promises the penitent thief, that he "should be with him in paradise," it is thought by the generality of the fathers that he means heaven itself; though modern commentators make no more of it, than that state of felicity which God has appointed for the reception of the pious, until the time of the general resurrection. Whether the place of departed souls is above, within, or beneath the highest heavens; whether there is one common receptacle for the souls of the righteous and unrighteous till the resurrection; or whether, from their departure out of their bodies, they dwell in separate mansions (as is more probable), are speculations we are no ways concerned to be inquisitive about, whilst we are satisfied of this main truth, that the righteous are, in the intermediate time between their death and resurrection, in a state of happiness, and the wicked in a state of misery. For, as far as our apprehensions of these matters go, a material place can no ways contribute, either to encrease or to diminish the happiness or misery of an immaterial spirit. Spirits that are divested of flesh and blood, wherever they are, carry heaven or hell along with them. The good angels are as happy here upon earth, whilst they are employed in the execution of God's will, as whilst they are conversant in the regions above, because "they do always behold the face of God, in whose presence is fulness of joy;" and Satan was no more happy, when "he came among the sons of God to present himself before the Lord," Job. i. 6. than he was, when he was "going to and fro in the earth." The happiness and misery of pure spirits hath no relation, that we know of, to the place where they are; but the happiness and misery of embodied spirits, or of men who are made up of souls and bodies, have a dependance upon the place of their abode;

and therefore we are sure, that wherever separate souls are lodged till the resurrection, after the resurrection righteous and wicked men shall have places allotted to them suitable to their different states; the former shall be carried up to the highest heavens, and the latter shall be thrown down to the nethermost hell. *Calmet's Commentary*, and Bishop *Smalridge's Sermons*.

†² That Alphæus and Cleophas were one and the same person, is plain from hence,—That James, who is called the son of Mary, the wife of Cleophas, is the same with James the son of Alphæus; as indeed, in the Hebrew tongue, Alphæus and Cleophas differ only in the manner in which the Greeks have written or pronounced these two names. It is thought that she was the sister of the Holy Virgin, and the mother of James the Less, of Joses, of Simeon, and of Judas, who in the Gospel are called the brethren of our Lord, i. e. his cousins-german. When or where she died, is a matter of much uncertainty: But the Greeks keep the eighth of April in memory of the holy women who brought perfumes to embalm the body of Christ, and pretend, at this time, to have their bodies at Constantinople, in the church of the Holy Virgin, built by Justin II. though others talk of the translation of her body in particular into the city of Veroli near Rome; while others again pretend, that it is in a little city of Provence, called the Three Marys, on the banks of the Rhone, and of the sea. All fictions equally credible! *Calmet's Dictionary* under the word *Mary of Cleophas*.

†³ The generality of commentators do infer from hence, that her husband Joseph was at this time dead, and therefore our Lord took care that she should not be destitute, by charging his beloved disciple to treat her as his mother; and he accordingly not only received her into his own house, as long as he continued in Palestine, but, when he removed to Ephesus, took her along with him, where (according to the account of the fathers of the council held there) she is said to have died, and been buried in a very old age. Others however maintain, that she died, and was buried at Jerusalem, and they farther add, that the apostles being dispersed in different parts of the world to labour in the preaching of the Gospel, were all on a sudden miraculously transported to Jerusalem, that they might be present at the decease of the Blessed Virgin; that after her death they buried her in the valley of Gethsemane. where, for three whole days, were heard concerts of heavenly singers; and that at the end of the three days, when the concert ceased, and St Thomas, who had not been present at the burial, was desirous to see

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During these melancholy transactions, the whole frame of nature began to be changed: The sun withdrew its light †; the stars appeared; and the eclipse was the more remarkable, because the moon, being then at full, could not be in conjunction. This eclipse began about twelve, and lasted till three in the afternoon; when all things were full of horror and amazement. Mens hearts began to relent, and, instead of their former insults, they stood in silent expectance of what would be the issue. All this while our Blessed Lord continued meek and silent, though languishing and wasting under the agonies which his body endured, and the heavy load of the Divine indignation against sin; till, in the words of the Psalmist, he complained at last, "Eli! Eli! Lamasabachthani, i. e. †² My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

One of the soldiers, hearing the word *Eli*, or *Elohi*, out of ignorance of the Hebrew tongue, thought that he called for Elias to help him in his distress; and thereupon dipping a sponge in vinegar, †³ put it on a reed, which St John calls a stalk of hyssop †,

her corpse, they opened her tomb again; but not finding the body there, they thence concluded that God had been pleased to honour it with immortality, by a resurrection previous to that of other men. But these are traditions that (to speak the softest thing of them) deserve no regard at all. *Calmet's Dictionary* under the word *Mary*.

† Whether this darkness was confined to the land of Judea, or extended itself much farther, even over the whole hemisphere where it happened, is a question wherein the ancients are not so well agreed. Origen and some others are of the former opinion; but the majority differ from them, and for this they quote Phlegon, the famous astronomer under the emperor Trajan, affirming, that in the fourth year of the CCIII Olympiad (which is supposed to be that of the death of Christ), there was such a total eclipse of the sun at noon-day, that the stars were plainly to be seen; and from Suidas they likewise cite Dionysius the Areopagite, then at Heliopolis in Egypt, expressing himself to his friend Apollophanes, upon this surprising phenomenon, "either that the Author of Nature suffered, or that he was sympathising with some one who did: For, whereas in common eclipses the sun's total darkness can continue but twelve or fifteen minutes at most, this is recorded to have lasted no less than three full hours, Matth. xxvii. 45. *Universal History*, lib. ii. c. 11.

†² In the Hebrew way of speaking, it is certain, that God is said to leave or forsake any person, when he suffers him to fall into great calamities, and lie under great misfortunes, and does not help him out of them. To this purpose Zion, having been long afflicted, is brought in by the prophet complaining, "the Lord hath forsaken me, the Lord hath forgotten me," Isaiah xlix. 14.; and as the royal Psalmist is very frequent in such complaints, so he explains the sense of them when he addresses himself to God, "why art thou so far from my prayer, so that, though I cry in the day-time, thou hearest not?" Psal. xxii. 1, 2. That David was not fallen into any despondency, is manifest from his calling God so emphatically *his God*; and that our Blessed Saviour was not, as some think, under any failure of his trust in God, or any perturbation of spirit from the sense of Divine wrath, is evident from his saying of his suffering con-

dition, "It is finished," and from the very words wherein he breathed his last, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit." The truth is, this very thing shews the great composure of his mind; that while he was hanging upon the cross, he was so far master of himself as to repeat the twenty second psalm, whereof the title or first words are, "Eli, Eli," &c.; a psalm which is allowed by all commentators to relate to the Messiah; which contains a most lively description of all the remarkable particulars of his passion, and for that reason was a portion of Scripture which he thought proper to recite upon this mournful occasion. Upon the supposition, then, that our Lord was now repeating that noble psalm, which, after a recapitulation of his sufferings, concludes with very comfortable promises both to him and his followers; this shews that he was far from being under any doubt or despair, that he kept his mind indeed all along calm and serene, and under the pressure of whatever he suffered, supported himself with the comfortable prospect of what was to follow. *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Universal History*, lib. ii. c. 11.

†³ The vinegar and sponge, in executions of condemned persons, were set ready to stop the too violent flux of blood, that the malefactor might be the longer in dying, but to the Blessed Jesus they were exhibited in scorn; for, being mingled with gall, the mixture was more horrid and unpleasant. *Howell's History* in the notes.

‡ It may be pretended perhaps, that a branch of hyssop might not be long enough to reach our Saviour's mouth, as he was hanging upon the cross; but besides that crosses were not, in some places, erected so high, but that beasts of prey could reach the bodies that were fastened to them; and that hyssop, in those countries, as well as mustard-seed, was of a much longer growth than it is with us; I cannot see why the person that offered our Saviour this vinegar might not make use of a ladder, if the cross was so high that he could not fairly reach him. Nor is the difference in St Matthew's calling that a reed, which St John calls hyssop, of any manner of moment, because the Greek word *κλάμος*, is put to signify a stalk, a shoot, or branch of any kind; so that St Matthew speaks of that in the general, which St John specifies in particular. *Calmet's Commentary*.

and, as he complained of being thirsty, gave it him to drink. Others however were for letting it alone, to see whether Elias † would come and help him; but when he had tasted the vinegar, and now knew that all the types and prophecies concerning him were fulfilled, his Father's wrath appeased, and the great work of man's redemption accomplished, he said, "It is finished," and then, "bowing down his head," he recommended his soul into his Father's hands, and so "gave up the ghost †²."

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

Upon his expiration, there immediately happened a terrible earthquake †³, which rent the vail †⁴ of the temple from top to bottom, split the rocks †⁵, and opened the graves and tombs, so that the bodies of several who were dead †⁶ arose, and went into

† There was a tradition among the Jews, that it was Elias's proper office to come and succour such as were in misery: And, accordingly, some of the Jews, either deceived with the resemblance of the words, thought that our Lord called Elias to his help; or, giving a malicious turn to the sense of the words, which they well enough understood, did thereby insult him for his calling in vain Elias to his help. *Beausobre's Annotations.*

†² The original phrase may denote a *delivering up*, or (as our Saviour expresses it, Luke xxiii. 46.) a "committing his spirit into the hands of God," as a sacred trust to be restored again, and united to his body, at the time prefixed by his own infinite wisdom; and plainly implies such a dissolution, and actual separation of soul and body, as every common man undergoes when he dies: But herein is a remarkable difference, that what is in other men the effect of necessity, was in Jesus a voluntary act, and the effect of his own free choice. Hence the generality of interpreters have thought, that St John takes notice, that Christ bowed his head before he gave up the ghost, whereas, in common cases, the falling of the head follows after the breath's going out of the body: And hence also St Mark observes, that Jesus's crying out with so loud and strong a voice, immediately before his expiring, was one reason that moved the centurion to think him an extraordinary person; for this shewed that it was not the excess of pain and sorrow that had tired out nature and hastened his death, but that he who (as himself professes, John x. 18.) "had power to lay down his life," and could not have it taken from him without his own permission and consent, did freely and voluntarily lay it down at such a time as himself saw convenient. *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. ii.

†³ Some are of opinion, that this was the same earthquake that happened in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, and was the greatest that ever was known in the memory of man. Both Pliny and Macrobius make mention of it; and the latter informs us, that it destroyed no less than twelve cities in Asia: but by the Sacred text it appears, that the earthquake here mentioned affected only the temple of Jerusalem, and the parts which are there specified, the vail, the ground, the rocks, the tombs, &c. Nor does it seem improbable, that this prodigy was shewn particularly in this place, to foretel the destruction of the temple, and its worship, upon the people's sad impiety in crucifying the Lord of Life. *Hammond's Annotations.*

†⁴ In the second temple, between the holy place

and the most holy (says Maimonides) there was no partition-wall, though in the first temple there was one, built of the thickness of a cubit. The division between them was made by two vails, one from the extremity of the holy place, and the other from the extremity of the most holy, with a void space of a cubit between. The like form of separation was observed in the temple which Herod rebuilt, as Josephus informs us (*de Bello Jud. lib. vi. c. 14.*), and therefore it must be a mistake in those who think that this vail was a partition wall of stones. Whether of the two vails, that which belonged to the holy place, or that which hung in the most holy, was at this time rent in twain, is a question among the ancients, though the words of the author to the Hebrews, where he tells us, that Christ, as our high priest, "has consecrated for us a new way, through the vail," so that we may with "boldness enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," Heb. x. 19, &c. seems to be a pretty clear determination of it. *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

†⁵ In the "church of the sepulchre" (which stands on Mount Calvary) is still to be seen that memorable cleft in the rock, occasioned, as it is said, by the earthquake which happened at our Lord's crucifixion. This cleft (as to what now appears of it) is about a span wide at its upper part, and two deep. After this it closes; but then it opens again below, and runs down to an unknown depth of earth. That this rent was made by the earthquake which happened at our Lord's passion, there is only tradition to prove: but that it is a natural and genuine breach, and not counterfeited by any art, the sense and reason of every one that sees it may convince him; for the sides of it fit like two tallies to each other, and yet it runs in such intricate windings, as could not be well counterfeited by art, or performed by any instrument. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, part i. and *Mr Maundrell's Journey*, &c.

†⁶ Since St Paul styles our Saviour, "the first-born from the dead," Coloss. i. 18. and "the first-fruits of them that slept," 1 Cor. xv. 20. most commentators are of opinion, that though several tombs were opened, as soon as our Saviour expired, yet none of the saints arose until he returned from the grave: but then, who these saints were, it is no easy matter to conjecture. Some think, that the "man after God's own heart," king David, or some of the ancient patriarchs, might best deserve this pre-eminence: but on the day of Pentecost, St Peter tells the Jews plainly, that the body of David was still in

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Jerusalem, where they were seen, and known by many. These prodigies which attended our Lord's death, struck the spectators with such amazement, that, as they returned home, they smote upon their breasts, and with great lamentation declared, that the person who had suffered that day was innocent. Nay, the very centurion †, and other soldiers who attended the execution, from a conviction of what they had seen, were not afraid to affirm, that he certainly was †² "the Son of God."

The day whereon our Saviour suffered was the eve or preparation to the paschal festival, which fell that year on the Jewish Sabbath-day, and so was a feast and Sabbath together. That therefore so great and solemn a day might not be profaned †³ by the suspension of the bodies on the cross, the rulers of the Jews came and requested of Pilate that their legs might be broken to hasten their deaths, and their bodies taken down; which accordingly was executed upon the two thieves: But when the soldiers came to Jesus, and found him already dead, instead of breaking his legs †⁴, one of them pierced his side with a spear †⁵, from which issued out a great quantity of †⁶ blood and water.

its sepulchre, and not "ascended into heaven," Acts ii. 29. 34. and St Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, tells us of the patriarchs, that "they had not received the promise, God having designed that they, without us, should not be made perfect," Heb. xi. 39, 40. The most probable conjecture, therefore, is, that they were some of those who believed in Jesus (as old Simeon did), and died a little before his crucifixion; because, of these persons it is said, that they "went into the holy city, and appeared to many," and so very probably were well known to those to whom they appeared, as having been their contemporaries. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*.

† This officer, according to some, was named Longinus, and the tradition is,—That, upon his conversion to the Christian faith, being expelled from the Roman army, wherein he served, he returned to Cappadocia, where he began to preach Jesus Christ, but was there beheaded, and his head carried to Pilate. But all this seems to be a fable, for which there is no foundation in history. *Calmet's Commentary*.

†² That the Son of God did not always signify one who was so by an eternal generation, but only one that was his beloved and adopted Son, is apparent from hence, that what is here called the Son of God [or rather a Son of God, there being no article], is in St Luke, chap. xxiii. 47. said to "be a just man." For, though the Jews very well knew, from the second psalm, that their Messiah was to be the Son of God; yet, that they did not know him to be so in the higher sense of the word, seems to be evident, because they did not know how David could call him Lord, Matth. xxii. 45.

†³ The Jews had a strict injunction in their law, that the dead bodies of those who were executed should not hang all night, but by all means be buried that day, Deut. xxi. 22, 23. but the Romans used to do otherwise. They suffered the bodies to hang upon the cross always until they were dead, and in some cases a considerable time longer. On this occasion it seems as if the Jews had left the Romans to follow their own custom, in relation to the crucified persons,

and were in no concern to have them taken down, had it not been for the near approach of their passover, whose joy and festivity they thought might be damp't by so melancholy a sight. Upon this account they petition Pilate to have them removed: And the reason why Pilate might be rather induced to grant their request, was, that the Romans themselves had such respect for the feasts of their emperors, that on those days they always took down the bodies from the cross, and gave them to their parents. *Calmet's Commentary*.

†⁴ The prophecy which foretold, "that a bone of him should not be broken," is usually referred to the command concerning the paschal lamb, "Thou shalt not break a bone of it," Exod. xii. 46. But, as David was likewise a type of Christ, we cannot see why it may not refer to these words of his, "He keepeth all his bones, so that none of them is broken," Psal. xxxiv. 20. or why the promise, which respects all righteous persons, might not more particularly be fulfilled in the just One. *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

†⁵ The man who did this was not one of the horse (as he is usually painted) but of the foot soldiers; because a spear, or short spike, was one part of the armour belonging to the Roman infantry; and the reason why this was done, was not only that a prediction concerning him might be fulfilled, (Zech. xii. 10. which the Jews apply to the Messiah), but that his death might be put beyond all dispute, which, had it been doubtful, must have made his resurrection (upon which the truth of our religion depends) remain doubtful likewise. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†⁶ St John the evangelist, who was an eye-witness of this passage, affirms it in a particular manner, chap. xix. 35. and in his first Epistle, chap. v. 6. makes it a matter of great moment, when he tells us, "This is he that came by water and blood; not by water only, but by water and blood." The force of whose reasoning (according to the learned Hammond) is this,—"That as water was the emblem of our Saviour's purity, and blood the evidence of his forti-

Among the disciples of our Lord there was one named Joseph, a man of great wealth and honour †, born in Arimathæa †², and not improbably one of the council of the Sanhedrim, but who stood in some fear of them while our Saviour was alive. After his death †³ however he took courage, and going to Pilate, begged leave of him to let him take down the body of Jesus and bury it. The governor was surprised to hear that he was dead so soon; but being informed by the centurion that it actually was so, he ordered the body to be delivered to Joseph, who, for the present, wrapped it up in fine linen cloths, which he had provided for that purpose; and, at the same time, Nicodemus †⁴ (another private disciple of our Lord's) brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, with other spices and perfumes, to embalm his body, according to the manner of the Jews.

From Matth. xx. 19. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end. Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

tude and patience, and both of these proceeded from his side, they jointly evince the necessity of such purity and patience in every one that claims a right in Christ." The Jewish doctors have a tradition (as Dr Lightfoot acquaints us), that when Moses smote the rock, there first came forth blood, and then water. Whether the apostle might have respect to that tradition, when he calls Christ that rock, 1 Cor. x. 4. is uncertain; but among the many other important designs of this water and blood, the ancients have well observed, that by a special act of God's Providence, there flowed, at this time, from our Saviour's side the two sacraments of his church, baptism and the supper of the Lord. As to the natural reason of this flux of water and blood from our Lord's body, anatomists tell us, that there is a capsula near the heart, called the pericardium, which hath water in it, of continual use to cool the heart, and that the coming out of water here with the blood, was a sure evidence of the wounding his very heart, and consequently of the certainty of his death. *Hammond's Annotations*, and *Howell's History* in the Notes.

† His riches and honourable station are mentioned, not out of any vanity and ostentation, that a person of so considerable a figure should pay respect to the body of our Blessed Lord; but chiefly to shew how strangely God brought an ancient prophecy concerning the Messiah, viz. that notwithstanding the infamous manner of his dying, he should "make his grave with the rich at his death," Isa. liii. 9. which in itself was a most unlikely thing, not only because the bodies of them that were crucified did, by the Roman laws, hang upon the gibbet sometimes until they were consumed; but because the Jews (though they did not allow of this severity to the dead) did nevertheless always bury their malefactors in some public, neglected, and ignominious place; and so, in all probability, must our Saviour have been treated, had not Joseph applied himself to the governor, in whose disposal the bodies of executed persons were. *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. ii.

†² *Ramatha* (from whence *Arimathæa* is formed) signifies *height*. It is placed by St Jerom between *Lydda* and *Joppa*, but modern travellers speak of it as lying between *Joppa* and *Jerusalem*, and situated on a mountain, though very different from *Ramathaim-Zophim*, the place where *Samuel* was born, 1 Sam. i. 1. and which lay to the north, whereas *Arimathæa* was to the west of *Jerusalem*. *Calmet's*

Dictionary under the word.

†³ It may well seem strange that Joseph, who never durst openly profess a regard to Jesus while living, should now, when he had suffered all the ignominy of a malefactor, not stick to interest himself for his honourable interment. But besides that this might be an instance of the efficacy of those impressions which God makes upon mens minds, even at the most unlikely seasons of prevailing, the desire which Pilate had expressed to save our Lord's life, and avowed unwillingness to condemn him, together with the prodigies that had accompanied his crucifixion, and made now every heart relent, might be motive enough for him to go in boldly to Pilate, (as St Mark expresses it) and beg the body of him before it was taken from the cross. According to the *Mishna*, the nearest relations of those that suffered as criminals, were not permitted to put their bodies into their family tombs, until their flesh was all consumed in the public sepulchres: And this might possibly be the reason why Joseph made such haste with his request to the governor, viz. that he might prevent our Lord from being cast into one of the public charnel-houses, appointed for the reception of malefactors bodies. *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. ii. and *Calmet's Commentary*.

†⁴ This is the same ruler of the Jews, and master of Israel, as the evangelist calls him, John iii. 1. 10. who at our Lord's first coming to Jerusalem, after he had entered upon his ministry, held a private conference with him, and for ever after was his disciple, though he made no open profession of it till after his passion. Whether it was before or after this time that he received baptism from some of Christ's disciples is a thing uncertain; but there is reason to believe that the Jews, when they came to be informed of this, deposed him from the dignity of a senator, excommunicated him, and drove him out of Jerusalem. Nay, it is farther said, that they would have put him to death, but that, in consideration of Gamaliel, who was his uncle or cousin german, they contented themselves with beating him almost to death, and plundering his goods. It is added likewise, that Gamaliel conveyed him to his country house, where he provided him with things necessary for his support, and when he died buried him honourably by St Stephen. *Calmet's Dictionary* under the name.

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Not far from the place of execution, there was a garden † belonging to Joseph, where he had lately hewn out of a †² rock a sepulchre †³ for his own proper interment. Having therefore embalmed our Saviour's body, and wound it up in the linen cloths, here they buried it, and, with a large stone cut out of the rock for that purpose, closed the mouth of the sepulchre: But Mary Magdalene, and the other women, who were present at his death, and assisted at his burial, having taken good notice of the place where he was laid, went and prepared fresh spices for his farther embalment as soon as the Sabbath-day was over.

On the Sabbath-day the rulers of the Jews came to Pilate, and informing him, "That our Lord (whom they called an impostor) having, in his lifetime, made it his boast that on the third day he would rise again from the dead, they therefore requested of him, that he would order the sepulchre to be kept under a strong guard until that day was past, lest his disciples should steal him away by night, and then give it out, that he was risen from the dead, which might prove a more dangerous seduction to the people than any thing they had yet fallen into." Whereupon he gave them leave to take a detachment of the guard †⁴ of the temple, and to post them near the sepulchre; which ac-

† This garden has been long since converted into a church, called the Church of the Sepulchre, as being built over the place where our Lord's sepulchre was. To fit this place for the structure of a church, the first founders were obliged to reduce it to a plain area, which they did, by cutting down several parts of the rock, and by elevating others: But in this work, care was taken that none of those parts of the place which were more immediately concerned in our Lord's passion, should be either altered or diminished; inso-much, that that part of it where Christ is said to have been fastened to and lifted upon the cross, is left entire, standing at this day eighteen steps above the common floor of the church; and the holy sepulchre itself, which was at first a cave, hewn into a rock under ground, having had the rock cut away from it all around, is now, as it were, a grotto above ground. [There is reason however to doubt, whether the place which is shewn as our Lord's sepulchre be indeed the cave in which he was buried. One of the most intelligent of all our modern travellers in the Holy Land is of opinion that it is not, and has brought very strong arguments to prove that the holy sepulchre was another cave, of which he gives a particular and interesting description. The question however is not of sufficient importance to be discussed at length in this work, and therefore the reader is referred to] *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, part i. and *Dr Clarke's Travels in the Holy Land*.

†² There are several circumstances in the description of our Saviour's tomb, which contribute very greatly to the confirmation of the truth of his resurrection. As, 1st, The place of his interment was near adjoining to the city, that thereby the miracle of his resurrection might be better known to all the Jews, and his own apostles more especially. 2dly, His tomb was a "new one, wherein never man before was laid," and therefore, when his body left this sepulchre empty, no suspicion could remain of its being any other body than that which Joseph had taken down from the cross, and disposed of in that place. 3dly, It was "hewn out of a rock," incapable of being under-

mined, or dug through; and therefore there was no possible way for the person, deposited in a place so contrived, to get out again, except only at the mouth or door of the cave. And yet, 4thly, A large stone, which (according to Mr Maundrell who saw it) is two yards and a quarter long, one broad, and one thick, closed up the entrance of it, all which were watched by a strong guard of sixty soldiers: So that, as the sentry would not suffer the body to be conveyed out by this way, the nature of the place would not allow it by any other; and therefore, had not our Lord been more than man, he could never have forced his passage out. Of such mighty significance it is to us, that so punctual a description is given the world of our Blessed Lord's burial, and all the circumstances relating to it, since they all contribute great strength to these two most important articles of the Christian faith, the death and resurrection of Jesus. *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels*, vol. ii. and *Whitby's Annotations*.

†³ This sepulchre of Joseph's, which fell to our Lord's share (according to the description of those that have lately seen it), is a kind of small chamber, almost square; within a cave, of which height, from bottom to top, is eight feet and an inch; its length, six feet and an inch; and its breadth, fifteen feet and ten inches. Its entrance, which looks towards the east, is but four feet high, and two feet four inches wide. The place within where our Lord's body was laid, takes up a whole side of the cave. The stone which was laid to secure the door of his sepulchre is still remaining even to this day, but the particular parts of it are not visible, being all incrustated over with white marble, except in five or six little places, where it is left bare to receive the kisses and other devotions of pilgrims. *Mark Lucas's Voyage to Asia Minor*, vol. ii. p. 12. and *Maundrell's Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*.

†⁴ It is generally supposed that this guard of the temple was a large detachment of Roman soldiers who, in the time of the feast, kept sentry in the gates of the temple, to prevent such disorders as might

cordingly they did; and, to secure it against all private attempts, set a seal † on the stone that was at the mouth of it.

Early next morning, even just as the sun was rising, Mary Magdalene, and the other women who on Friday evening had prepared spices and perfumes, went to the sepulchre to embalm again our Saviour's body, ignorant of the guard that was placed there. Their whole care and consultation in the way was, how they might get the large stone, that was at the entrance, removed. But, before they arrived at the place, an angel from heaven had rolled it away, || and sat upon it; at the sight of whom (for his

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19.
to the end.

very well happen among such a large concourse of people: For, by the sequel of their story, it appears, Matth. xxviii. 11. that they depended upon Pilate, were subject to his correction, and consequently were not Levites (as some imagine), but Roman soldiers. *Calmet's Commentary.*

† When Daniel was cast into the lions den, it is said, "That the king sealed the stone that was laid upon the mouth of it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords, that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel," chap. vi. 17. and from hence some have supposed, that the stone wherewith our Lord's sepulchre was closed, was sealed with Pilate's signet, because it was a matter of public concern, as others have fancied that it was farther secured by a great chain that went across it, and that the marks thereof were visible in the venerable Bede's time. All fables. *Calmet's Commentary.*

|| The seeming opposition between what is recorded in the xvth chapter of St Mark's Gospel, concerning some circumstances that happened at our Lord's sepulchre, and the narrations of the other evangelists, made some of the ancients (as St Jerom informs us, Epist. ad Hebid.) call in question its authority. But as this chapter was owned in the times of Irenæus (lib. iii. c. 11.) and is quoted in the Apostolic Constitutions, lib. vi. c. 15.), a small matter of distinguishing, added to what Dr Whitby has done, by way of appendix to it, will be a means sufficient to reconcile them. As to the difference between the account in St Luke, who mentions the vision of angels to Mary Magdalene, before her going to Peter, and that in St John, who makes it subsequent to it, our learned Hammond is of opinion, that this and several other inconsistencies may be adjusted by this one consideration,—That St Luke, writing from notes which he had collected from eye-witnesses, and not from his own knowledge, observes not so exactly the order of time when things were done and spoken, but oftentimes, in another method, puts together things of affinity to one another, though not done or said at the same time. For so, in relation to the transactions at our Lord's sepulchre, he first sets down all that belongs to the women together, and then that which concerns Peter, though part of that which concerned the women was done after what is mentioned of St Peter: For the punctual observation of order (says our annotator) is not necessary when the things themselves are truly recited. The right order of the story he therefore supposes is this,—“Mary, and the other women, came to the sepulchre, but found that, before

their coming, an angel, with an earthquake, had rolled away the stone, and that the body was gone. Upon this, Mary returns to Peter and John, tells them what she had seen, and they, to satisfy themselves of the truth of her report, hasten to the sepulchre; and having found things just as she told them, went away again. In the mean time the women stay at the sepulchre, wondering at the strange event; and then follows the vision of angels sitting upon the stone, and within the sepulchre, speaking to the women, and assuring them of the reality of Christ's resurrection; upon which they depart the second time, to tell the apostles the news.” *Hammond's Annotations on John xx. 11.*

[As I have declared my opinion to be that St Luke was personally a disciple of our Lord, I cannot admit the supposition on which Hammond attempts to reconcile his narrative with the narratives of the other evangelists. That St Luke wrote from notes, I have not the smallest doubt; but so, I believe, did Matthew, Mark, and John. It is therefore incumbent on me to find some other method than this of Dr Hammond's to reconcile the accounts which the different evangelists give of what past between the angels and the Galilean women at our Lord's sepulchre; but fortunately by myself and for the public, this has been already done by Bishop Horsley.

“Every attentive reader of the Gospels knows,” says that eminent prelate, “that the female followers of our Lord were numerous. He will easily discover that those numerous female followers had made an appointment to meet at the sepulchre at an early hour of the first day of the week, for the purpose of embalming the body; a business which the intervention of the Sabbath had obliged them to postpone. He will easily imagine that those women would be lodged in different parts of the city, and of consequence would come to the sepulchre in several parties and by different paths; that they arrived all early, though not exactly at the same instant of time. He will perceive that the detachments of the heavenly squadron—the angels who attended on this great occasion—became visible and invisible at pleasure, and appeared to the women of the different parties, as they successively arrived, in different forms, and accosted them in different words; and in this way the first evidences of the fact were multiplied, which would have been single had the women all arrived in a body at the same instant, and seen all the same vision. Each evangelist, it may be supposed, has confined himself to that part of the story which he had at the first hand

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countenance was like lightning), and at the noise of the earthquake which accompanied his appearance, the guards fell down, like so many dead men, so that the women had free entrance into the sepulchre; but were not a little astonished to see the body gone, and an angel, in a refulgent habit, sitting in the place where it had been laid. Frightened at this apparition, they made all the haste they could out of the sepulchre; but were met by another angel in the like glorious apparel, who not only acquainted them with our Lord's resurrection, according to what he had foretold his disciples, but (to give them a fuller conviction) reconducted them into the sepulchre; shewed them, that the place where he had been laid was empty; and ordered them to go immediately and carry the apostles (but more especially † Peter) the news thereof. The women, accordingly, filled with fear, and joy, and wonder altogether, hastened to find out the apostles; to whom they related what they had heard and seen: but instead of believing them, they looked upon this as no more than the product of a weak and frightened imagination.

Out of curiosity, however, Peter and John ran to the sepulchre, and found the thing true according to the women's report; the body gone, †² the burying-clothes lying on the ground; and the napkin that was about his head very carefully folded and laid by itself. Notwithstanding this, such was their incredulity *, that they returned home,

from the women who had first fallen in his way, and each woman related what she herself had seen and heard, and which might be very different from what had been seen and heard by the women of another company.

The company which saw what is related by St Matthew (in which company Mary Magdalene, although mentioned by the evangelist, was not, I think, included), went by a path which led to the front of the sepulchre, and came within sight of it early enough to be witnesses to the descent of the angel, the flight of the guard, and the removal of the stone. While these things passed, Mary Magdalene with her party were coming by another path, which led round the back part of the sepulchre, and came not within sight of the entrance of the sepulchre till the first party had left it. They therefore no sooner came within sight than they saw that the stone was removed, and Mary Magdalene immediately ran back to inform Peter and John of her suspicions. The rest of the women of that party proceeded to the sepulchre, entered it, and were assured of our Lord's resurrection by the angel, whom they found within the tomb in the manner related by St Mark. Presently after these women had left the sepulchre, Peter and John arrived, followed by Mary Magdalene; for she hastened back to the sepulchre when she had apprised the apostles of her fears. After Mary Magdalene, waiting at the sepulchre, had seen our Lord, and was gone away to carry his message to the apostles, Luke's women arrive, and are informed of the resurrection by two angels within the tomb. In the interval between our Lord's appearance at the sepulchre to Mary Magdalene, and the arrival of Luke's party, he appeared to St Matthew's party, who were yet upon the way back to the city; for that the appearance to Mary Magdalene was the first St Mark testifies.—These few simple observations, as they reconcile the narratives of the several evangelists with each other, and the particulars of each narrative with the general fact in which they all consent, dissipate any

objections that may be raised from the varieties of their story." *Horsley's Nine Sermons, &c.* published 1815. p. 153, &c.]

† Peter is here named, not as the prince of the apostles, but (as the fathers say) for his consolation, and to take off the scruple which might lie upon his spirits, whether, after his threefold denial of his master (with such horrid aggravations attending it), he had not forfeited his right to be one of our Lord's disciples. *Whitby's Annotations.*

†² The custom of interment among the Jews was to roll the dead body (as we read our Saviour's was, John xix. 39, 40.) up in spices, which, though they preserved it in some measure from corruption, by their glowy nature, could not but make the cloths that were used with them cling so close to the skin, as not to be drawn off without a great deal of time and difficulty. When therefore these coverings were found regularly pulled off, wrapped up, and laid by, this plainly shews that the disciples could have no hand in stealing away their master's body. For do thieves, after they have rifed an house, use to spend time in putting things in order again? Or can it enter into any sober man's thoughts, that they who came by stealth, and in danger of their lives, (as the disciples certainly must have done upon such an adventure) should thus stay to awaken the guard, and trifle away their time in such hazardous and unnecessary niceties? Had they been really engaged in this affair, they certainly would have taken away the body at once, without tarrying to unbind and undress it. And therefore the condition in which the sepulchre was found, to every considerate man, must be a sufficient confutation of that idle pretence of the Jews, "His disciples came and stole him away." *The literal sense of the Scriptures Vindicated*, page 383.

* The remark of one of the ancients upon this subject is very good, "Nos de illorum dubitatione solidari," that their doubting is the confirmation of our faith; and the more difficulty they shewed in believing CHRIST's resurrection, the greater reason have

never supposing any thing else, but that somebody had taken him away. Mary Magdalene, who by this time was again returned to the sepulchre, stayed behind the two apostles weeping; and as she stooped down to look in, saw two angels in bright apparel, sitting where the body had lain, one at the head and the other at the feet. As the angels were enquiring of her the occasion of her tears, and she telling them that it was the loss of her Lord's body, she happened to turn herself round, and saw Jesus himself; but supposing him to be the master of the garden (where the sepulchre was), she desired of him, that if he had removed the body anywhere, he would be so kind as to let her know, that she might take care of it. Hereupon our Lord, calling her by her name, she immediately knew him, and throwing herself at his feet, was going to embrace him; but he forbade her, upon the account that † "he had not as yet ascended to his Father," and only required her to acquaint his apostles with his resurrection, and immediate ascension into heaven; which she failed not to do, but still they gave no credit to her report.

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

In the mean time some of the guards, in a great fright, fled into the city, and related all that had happened to the chief priests and rulers; who immediately assembled themselves to consult upon this important affair; and came at length to this resolution, viz. to bribe the soldiers with a large sum of money, and thereby engage them to give it out among the people, that, while themselves were asleep, the disciples of Jesus came, and stole him away; promising them withal, that, in case this their pretended neglect should come to the governor's ears, they would take care to pacify him. The soldiers accordingly took the money, and obeyed their orders: and this †² report was current among the Jews for many years after.

On this same day of Christ's resurrection, as two of his disciples were taking a walk

we to believe it; because the testimony of those who themselves believe not till after full conviction, is, upon that account, much more credible. *Whitby's Annotations.*

† Various are the senses which interpreters have been pleased to affix to the reason which our Lord here assigns for his rejecting this woman's homage and embraces, "I am not yet ascended to my Father." Some imagine, that Mary, still retaining her notions of a temporal kingdom, concluded, that our Lord was now risen on purpose to assume it, and therefore fell down to adore him; but that he, willing to raise her mind to spiritual and celestial thoughts, gave her to understand, that, as yet, it was not a proper time for her to make her addresses to him, because he was not yet ascended into heaven, from whence he was to administer his kingdom, and to send down the Holy Ghost, in order to form a spiritual communion between him and his true disciples. *Beausobre's Annotations.* Others suppose, that this woman imagined, that our Lord was risen again, in the same manner that Lazarus did, viz. to live upon earth as he had done before; and that therefore, to convince her of the contrary, he bid her not touch him as a mortal man, because "I am not yet ascended into heaven," but in a short time shall, and that is the place where you are to pay me your homage and adoration. *Calmet's Commentary.* Others again say, that by a figure, common enough among grammarians, who frequently change one tense for another, our Saviour's words may denote, that he was not then about to ascend, but to stay many days upon earth, so that Mary

might have space and opportunity enough to pay her adorations, and to satisfy herself in the truth of his resurrection. *Whitby's Annotations.* But these, and several other interpretations of the like kind, are far from being natural, and seem calculated on purpose to exclude the notion of our Saviour's frequent ascensions during his stay upon earth after his resurrection, which, in the course of the subsequent answers, we hope to evince to be true.

†² Some are of opinion, that the report which the evangelists speaks of, as current among the Jews, was not that our Lord's disciples came and stole him away, but that the soldiers were corrupted by the high priests to say so. This indeed gives a quite different turn to the thing, and is very favourable to the Christian cause; but yet, whoever considers the circular letters, mentioned by Justin Martyr, which the rulers in Jerusalem sent to the principal Jews all the world over, concerning this fact, and the great pains which (as Tertullian informs us) they everywhere took to propagate it, together with the care which he and the other ancient apologists employed to confute this senseless, but malicious lie, must needs be of a contrary opinion, viz. that the report was spread, not against the Jewish rulers but the Christian disciples, and was not quite extinct when St Matthew wrote his Gospel, chap. xxviii. 15. which was much about eight years after Christ's death. [Probably at a much greater distance.] *Calmet's Commentary*; and the *Appendix* to the preceding Dissertation on the Four Gospels.

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in the afternoon, to a town called Emmaus, † and discoursing as they went along of what had lately happened, Jesus joined himself to their company, †² but they knew him not; and observing that they looked melancholy, he asked them the subject of their discourse, and what it was that made them so disconsolate? To which one of them replied, “†³ That the subject of their discourse was too notorious even to escape the knowledge of the greatest stranger; that it was concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who indeed was a great prophet; one whom they expected would have been the King and Redeemer of Israel, but, to their great disappointment, had of late been delivered to death by their rulers, and crucified. And what is more astonishing, continued he, this very day (which is the third since his death) some women of our company, having been early at the sepulchre, and not finding the body, surprised us with an account that they had seen a vision of angels, who assured them that he was alive; which in part was confirmed by some of our men too, who went to the sepulchre, and found it empty, but did not see him.”

Hereupon our Lord took occasion to reprove their incredulity, and, from the testimony of the prophets, to convince them, that it was highly necessary the Messiah should suffer death, and rise again, in order to a glorious exaltation. As they drew near to the village where they intended to spend that night, Jesus †⁴ seemed as if he had farther to go; but, being unwilling to lose his good conversation, they, with some entreaty, †⁵ prevailed with him to stay. He did so: And as he was sitting at the table with them, took bread, blessed it, brake it, and delivered it to them as he was wont to do; whereupon their eyes were opened, and they knew him, but immediately he vanished †⁶ out of their sight.

As soon as the two disciples had recovered from their surprise, they hastened to Je-

† Emmaus (which was afterwards made a city, and called Nicopolis) was at this time a small village, about seven miles distant from Jerusalem to the west, where it is supposed, by Bede and others, that either Cleophas or his companion had an house; which, by their importuning Jesus to go with them, seems not improbable, because they could not propose to entertain him so commodiously or hospitably in an inn. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, part i. and *Howell's History in the Notes*.

†² Whether it was, that after his resurrection his person was so considerably changed, that those who knew him before could not easily distinguish him; or that he appeared in an habit quite different from what he used to wear, which for some time might hinder them from recollecting who he was; or that he suspended the operation of their senses, that he might have a better opportunity to instruct their understandings; or that, by an extraordinary power, he withheld their eyes from perceiving him, by which, upon removing of that impediment, they immediately knew him. Any of these causes will answer the purpose better than that we should impute (as some do) their not knowing their master to their excessive grief and sorrow. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annot.*

†³ He who was the spokesman upon this occasion is said to be Cleophas, Luke xxiv. 18. who was the brother of Joseph, the husband of the Virgin Mary, and so the reputed uncle of Christ, whose son Simeon, (says Eusebius, lib. iii. c. 10.) by the joint consent of the apostles then living, was made bishop of Jerusalem after St James, as being the nearest of kin to our Saviour. *Howell's History*.

†⁴ And so very probably he would have done, had not the disciples pressed him to stay with them: But, supposing he had been resolved to abide with them, and was minded to try the temper of his fellow-travellers, we cannot from hence charge him either with dissimulation or deceit; because, though our words ought to be the certain interpreters of our thoughts, and are therefore not to be employed so as to deceive any, yet walking hath no certain signification, nor was it ever instituted to be an indication of the mind. *Whitby's Annotations*.

†⁵ The original word in St Luke is *παροξύνω*, which our translation has rendered “they constrained him,” in terms literal indeed, but in this place a little too harsh; because it is very improbable (especially if we consider the context) that these two disciples should offer any force or violence to Jesus, to make him go with them. *Howell's History in the Notes*.

†⁶ Origen is of opinion, that our Blessed Lord, for the forty days that he was upon earth after his resurrection, could make himself visible or invisible, when and to whom he pleased. It is not to be doubted, but that he had the same body that was deposited in the grave; but then, what the powers of a raised and glorified body (especially when in conjunction with the Deity) are, we cannot tell; only we may infer, that our Saviour could, at least with the same facility, disappear to his disciples now, as he did to the Jews when “they were about to stone him,” John viii. 59. which, it is generally supposed, he did, by the medium of a cloud cast over his body. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*.

Jerusalem, where the apostles were met together, who, upon their arrival, informed them that their Lord was certainly risen, and (a) had appeared unto Peter; whilst they in their turns related what had happened to them in the country, how Jesus had walked and conversed with them, and how they came to know him "by breaking of bread." But, notwithstanding all these testimonies, several among them remained still incredulous.

From Matth. xx 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15 to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

For fear of the Jews the apostles had shut the door, and were now sat down to supper in a private room, late in the evening, when our Blessed Saviour came in and saluted them; and, that they might not take him for a spirit or phantom, but for the very person that was crucified in their sight, he shewed them the wounds in his hands, his feet, and his side. Nay, that he might cure them of all scruple and doubtfulness, he ate a piece of a broiled fish †, and some honey-comb, before them all, and then, having a little upbraided them with their unbelief, he gave them several great and weighty instructions, an ability to understand the Scriptures †² more perfectly, a renovation of their commission to preach to all nations †³, a power and authority to remit or retain sins, a communication of the Blessed Spirit by breathing on them, and a promise of sending him more plentifully (to enable them to be witnesses †⁴ of his resurrection), before they were to depart from Jerusalem. And thus ended the first day of the week, which, in honour of our Blessed Saviour's resurrection, has ever since been kept as the Sabbath * among Christians.

(a) 1 Cor. xv. 5.

† This he did, not to satisfy any hunger that his body could suffer after its resurrection, but to prove to them that his body was truly raised, and himself was really present. And, since it cannot be supposed that Christ in this action designed any illusion, it follows from his very eating, that his body had those parts by which we chew our meat, and withal a stomach to receive it. *Whitby's Annotations.*

†² This, the evangelist tells us, our Saviour did by opening their minds, Luke xxiv. 45.; for it is one thing to open the Scriptures themselves, or to explain them, and another to open their understandings to perceive them; and Christ, very probably, did the latter, by giving them now some first-fruits of that Spirit of prophecy which fell more plentifully on them at the day of Pentecost. *Whitby's Annotations.*

†³ Though the word *tribes* does, in some particular places, signify the tribes and families of the Jews, exclusive of other people, and in very many places the nations of the Heathen world, in opposition to the Jews; yet this we are to observe, that wherever mention is made of preaching the Gospel, in order to gain converts to the Christian faith, the word relates, primarily, to the several parts of Judea and to the Jews, wheresoever they are in their dispersions abroad; then, secondarily, to the Gentiles mingled with the Jews; and, finally, to the whole Gentile world, when, upon the Jews rejecting the Gospel, the apostles were forced to depart from them; for such the tenor of their commission, and such their constant practice was. "It was necessary (say Paul and Barnabas to the Jews) that the word of God should first have been spoken to you (which refers, I suppose, to some precept of Christ, vid. Matth. x. 6. and xv. 24. which made it necessary); but seeing ye have put it from you, lo, we turn to the Gentiles, Acts xiii. 46. *Hammond's Annotations.*

†⁴ As Christ's resurrection was a matter of fact, it must be proved by the testimony of eye-witnesses, who, if they be honest men, and suffer the greatest prejudices in their fortunes, reputation, and life, for this testimony, give us the greatest reason to believe it. For their honesty will not suffer them, upon any account whatever, to deviate from the truth; their interest and prudence will not permit them (without any necessity laid upon them) to testify a falsehood, much more the grossest falsehood, to their utmost damage, and without any prospect of advantage; and then if they confirm this their testimony by all kinds of signs, miracles, and wondrous powers, exercised by themselves and others who embraced their testimony; and if this be done in all places, and on all persons for a whole age or ages, this makes it a thing impossible that they should thus attest a lie: And therefore our Lord bids his apostles "stay at Jerusalem," till they were thus empowered, by virtue from on high, to confirm this testimony, Acts i. 8. *Whitby's Annotations.*

* The Jewish Sabbath was at first instituted, not barely in commemoration of God's creating the world, but (as there is another reason subjoined) in memory of their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage: "For remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, therefore the Lord thy God commandeth thee to keep the Sabbath-day," Deut. v. 15. Now this bondage of theirs was an emblem of our captivity under sin, and their deliverance a type of our spiritual redemption. When therefore our redemption was accomplished, it became proper that the day of Sabbath should be altered, especially when the wise Providence of God had so ordered matters, that the old Jewish Sabbath, i. e. the seventh day, should be passed over, and the first made choice of, to be honoured with two such glorious miracles, as the resurrection of our Blessed Lord from the dead, and the

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At the above-mentioned appearance of our Blessed Saviour, all the apostles (except Thomas †) were present; and when they recounted to him every particular that had happened in his absence, so far was he from giving his assent to them, that he openly declared, that unless he had the utmost evidence * of sense, by putting his finger into the holes in his hands and side, he would not believe a word of what they told him. On the Sunday following, therefore, when in the same place, they were all met together, with the doors shut for fear of the Jews, and Thomas was with them, Jesus came, and, standing in the midst of them, saluted them, as formerly, with the blessing of peace. After that, turning to Thomas, he offered him the satisfaction which he desired, viz. the feeling his hands and his side, where the nails and the spear had pierced; which when the apostle had done, and upon conviction cried out in transport, "My God, and my Lord!" †² our Saviour gave him to understand, that his believing, after such a demonstrative evidence, was neither so praise-worthy nor rewardable, as was the faith of those who had not the like conviction.

After this appearance to the apostles in a full body, they all resolved (pursuant (a) to their Lord's directions) to leave Judea, and return into their own province of Galilee.

coming of the Holy Ghost from heaven. After this indeed, we find the apostles frequenting the synagogue on the Jewish Sabbath, but, from the time of their Lord's resurrection, they never did it (as they did before) "according to the commandment," Luke xxiii. 56. but "according to custom," or "as the manner was," Acts xvii. 2. and therefore we have reason to believe, that from the very first they looked upon the ancient Sabbath superseded by this other, which from the beginning they called *ἡ Κυριακή*, the Lord's day, and from the beginning employed in acts of religious worship: To which purpose we find Ignatius exhorting Christians, not to "sabbatize with the Jews, but to live according to the Lord's day, in which our life arose with him," Epist. ad Mag. 9. Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii. and Whitby's Annotations.

† What might be the occasion of this apostle's absence is variously conjectured. Some are of opinion, that as all fled from their master, when he was apprehended in the garden, they did not so soon assemble again, but by degrees dropped in, one by one, as they recovered from their fright; and that therefore, at this time, Thomas was not returned to the company. But others, from the natural temper of this apostle (as it appears from the Scripture-passages, wherein he is concerned, to be very scrupulous and hard of belief), do rather think, that taking offence at the apostles easy credulity, as he deemed it, and looking upon all that the women from the sepulchre, and the two disciples from Emmaus had said, as so many idle tales, he left the company in pure disgust, not long before our Saviour came in. Calmet's Commentary, and Young's Sermons, vol. ii.

* The manner by which the apostle might bring himself to this resolution, might possibly be by some such arguments as these:—"Jesus of Nazareth was put to death upon the cross; and, being dead, was laid and sealed up in a sepulchre, which was strictly watched by a guard of soldiers: but I am told, and required to believe, that, notwithstanding all this, he is risen, and indeed alive. Now surely things suit-

able to the stated course of nature should be believed before such as are quite beside it; and for a dead man to return to life is preternatural, but that those who report this may be mistaken, is very natural and usual. Dead I saw him; but that he is risen I only hear. In what I see with mine own eyes I cannot easily be deceived; but in what I only hear, I may, and often am. Here being two things then, proposed to my belief, my reason tells me that I ought to chuse that which is more credible; but it seems more credible, that a small number of witnesses (frightened and disturbed as they are), should be deceived, or (as honest as once they were) may conspire to deceive me, than that one should rise from the dead; "and therefore, except, &c." Young's Sermons, vol. ii.

†² This is a noble confession of the apostle's faith, wherein he not only recognizes Jesus for the Messiah, the very same Lord to whom he had been a servant and companion, during the space of his ministry, but owns likewise, and proclaims his Divine nature. For the original here is in terms so strict, and with such an addition of the Greek article, as the very heretics and enemies to truth confess to be the character of the word *God*, when taken in its most proper sense, and intended of the *true God only*. Nor can the words (if put for a note of admiration only) be of force sufficient to express any conviction in Thomas; because expressions of wonder, though they properly speak astonishment and surprise, do not always imply *belief*, and may therefore import the strangeness without the truth of the thing; whereas our Saviour, in his answer to Thomas, "because thou hast seen thou hast believed," John xx. 29, accepts this as a full and sufficient declaration of his assent; and therefore, to make it such, we must admit of that paraphrase, which some ancient translations supply it with, by reading, "Thou art my Lord, thou art my God!" Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

(a) Matth. xxvi. 32.—xxviii. 7.

They had not been long there, before Peter and several others of them went a fishing † in the lake or sea of Tiberias, but after much toiling all night they caught nothing. In the morning, as they were making to shore, a person †², unknown to them, being informed of their ill success, advised them to cast their net on the right side of the ship; which when they had done, they inclosed so great a number of large fishes, as made John suspect that the person on shore might possibly be their Master. This he no sooner suggested to Peter, but Peter, impatient of delay, throws on his coat †³ and jumps into the sea, and gets to land, while the other apostles had much ado to hawl the vessel and the net so loaded with fish, safe to shore. The number of the fishes was an hundred and fifty: But (what was more surprising) at their landing, they found a fire ready made, fish broiling on it, and bread standing by. This notwithstanding, our Lord ordered them to bring some of those which they had caught, and having †⁴ asked them to sit down with him, he not only distributed to them, but ate †⁵ some of the bread and fish himself, to give them a still farther assurance of the reality of his resurrection.

† From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

When dinner was ended, he entered into conversation with Peter; and having thrice demanded †⁶ of him, if he loved him, and thrice received a declaration that he did, he

† The apostles, as such, had nothing to do until the Holy Ghost should descend upon them; and, among the Jews, it was accounted a disgrace to be idle. Since fishing therefore was the ordinary occupation of several of them, in this intermediate time they thought it the best way to betake themselves to it, and that not only to keep themselves employed, but to supply their own want of necessities likewise, until they should have a proper call to the ministry, when, in all probability, they gave over the labours of their secular employs, and devoted themselves entirely to that work. *Grotius's* Annotations.

†¹ By this, one would think that our blessed Lord, after his resurrection, was not a little changed in his outward appearance, since his apostles (notwithstanding more interviews than one) could not so readily distinguish him, either by his voice or looks. Upon this occasion, however, he seems by his question, John xxi. 5. to personate one who might be come to buy some fish of them, and under that guise, (whilst they were busy and employed) might more easily pass upon them. *Calmet's* Commentary.

†³ The text tells us that he was naked before; but what is called naked signifies only to have part of the body uncovered, or to be without a gown or upper garment, according to the custom of the eastern people, and of the Romans, who, when they went abroad, or made any public appearance, wore a long upper garment, called in Latin *toga*. Of this kind was what the evangelist calls a fisher's coat; and from hence it seems pretty plain, that Peter did not swim, (as it is usually thought) but wade to land; since, if decency was the motive of putting on his coat, he could not have preserved that decency, had he come dripping wet (as he must have done, upon the supposition of his swimming) into his Master's presence. *Howel's* History in the Notes, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

†⁴ The fire, fish, and bread on the shore were all created, and produced by Christ out of nothing, to evidence at this time his Divine power; but lest there

should be thought any delusion in these, he ordered likewise some of the others that were just then taken to be dressed; and that they might not take him for an apparition only, he invited them to dine with him. As therefore, by the miracle of creating and miraculously catching the fishes, he proved himself to be God; so by his present eating of the fish, he evidenced himself to be a man, and consequently teacheth us, that our exalted high priest continues our kinsman in heaven. *Hammond's* and *Burkitt's* Annotations.

†⁵ It is not indeed said expressly, that at this time he did eat; but since St Peter tells us that "they did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead," Act x. 41. and St Luke testifies, that, on another occasion, "he did eat before them," chap. xxiv. 42, 43. as he did it then for the confirmation of his resurrection, it is hardly to be doubted but that he did it now for the same end. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†⁶ Our Saviour's words to Peter are, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" John xxi. 15. More than these, what? Some will tell us, that our Saviour, here pointing at the nets and fishing-boats, demanded of Peter whether he loved him and his service better than his ordinary employment and occupation; but this is a forced and jejune exposition. The apostle, to be sure, before our Lord's being taken into custody, had been very liberal in his professions of love to him. He had promised to go with him to prison and to death; and to show how much he surpassed the rest of his brethren, "though all should be offended because of thee, says he, yet will not I," Matth. xxvi. 33. and yet, upon the approach of the first danger, he forgot all his promises, and behaved more ingloriously than the rest. It is in allusion therefore to this, that our Lord begins this discourse with Peter; that he calls to his mind his former speeches, and contrary performances; and by thrice repeating this question, "Peter, lovest thou me?" in respect of his three denials, and at first, adding the words "more than these," in regard to his

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each time enjoined him to take care of the flock which he had committed to him. After this, in a figurative speech, he signified to him by what manner of death he was to glorify God, even by crucifixion *; but when Peter desired to know the fate of his favourite apostle St John, instead of gratifying his curiosity, he required him rather to attend to his own concerns, and as he was to resemble him in the manner of his death, so to endeavour to imitate him in his deportment under it; (a) "If I will that he stay till I come †, what is that to thee? Follow thou me." This answer of our Saviour's, however, gave occasion to a report among the rest of the disciples, †² that John was never to die; but (b) himself refuted that opinion in his Gospel, and by surviving the fate of Jerusalem, verified what our Saviour meant.

After this, our Lord having appointed a solemn meeting of as many of his disciples as could conveniently be got together, and named a certain mountain in Galilee †³ for that purpose, he there appeared, not only to the eleven apostles, but (c) "to five hundred brethren at once." Here he acquainted his apostles that all power, both in heaven and earth, was given to him; commanded them to instruct all nations, and to baptize them "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," and to press them to the observation of all his precepts; foretold them what mighty signs †⁴

magnifying his love above all others, he now engages him, by the sense and consideration of his fall, to a better discharge, and a more constant expression of his love, in converting men to the faith of Christ. *Whitby's and Hammond's Annotations.*

* The occasion of his being put to death is generally reported to be—That he, assisted by St Paul, had, at Rome, confounded the diabolical illusions of Simon Magus: Whereupon Nero, who was a favourer of magicians, being provoked, (or, as others think, to ingratiate himself with the people of Rome, after he had fired their city) gave orders for his being put to death; which the prefects (in the emperor's absence) took care to see executed upon him and St Paul at the same time. The latter, as a denizen, was beheaded with a sword; but St Peter, who had no claim to the like privilege, was sentenced to crucifixion. This, and the torments preparatory to it, he underwent with marvellous patience, and as a mark of his humility, requested, and obtained, to have his body fastened to the cross with his head downward, as judging it too great an honour to suffer in the same manner and posture that his Lord had done before him. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

(a) John xxi. 22.

† i. e. Come in judgment to take vengeance on the Jews. For though there are but two personal advents mentioned in Scripture; the first when our Lord came into the world to redeem it, and the second when he shall return again to judge it; yet this is no objection against his intermediate advent, which was not personal by any visible descent of his from heaven, but virtual, and effected by his sending the Roman army against the Jews, and giving signs from heaven and in the clouds of their approaching ruin. So that the sense of our Saviour's words is,—“If my pleasure is that he live till the dissolution of the Jewish state:” And accordingly we find, that though Peter was put to death under Nero, yet St John continued even to the time of Trajan's reign, above an hundred years after our Saviour's birth, and so thirty

after that this coming of his was past. *Whitby's and Hammond's Annotations.*

†² Because the Christians, at that time, by the coming of Christ, understood the last judgment; whereas our Saviour intended it of the destruction of Jerusalem, which, in effect, was a full emblem of the final dissolution of all things. *Beausobre's Annotations.*

(b) John xxi. 22.

†³ This mountain is generally supposed to be Tabor, the place where our Lord was transfigured, though some suppose it to be one that stood nearer the lake of Tiberias. *Calmet's Commentary.*

(c) 1 Cor. xv. 6.

†⁴ We are not to suppose, however, that our Lord promised the gift of miracles to every Christian convert; since this would have made miracles (which should only be employed on important occasions, where the glory of God or the good of mankind is concerned) too common, and consequently of no validity at all. So that this promise, though expressed in general terms, must necessarily be limited to the apostles and apostolic men. Of "their casting out devils, healing diseases, and speaking with new tongues," we have instances almost innumerable. "Their taking up serpents" seems to be foretold by that Sybil, from whose oracles Virgil, very probably, borrowed this verse of his:

Occidet et serpens, et fallax herba veneni
Occidet.

And from St Paul it appears that this promise was literally fulfilled, when, after a viper had fastened upon his hand for some time, he shook it off into the fire, without receiving any hurt, Acts xxviii. 5. and as to the drinking of deadly poisons, we have it recorded by Papias, of Barsabas surnamed the Just; by Ado in his Martyrology, of the Cæcilian soldier; and by Gregory of Tours, of Sabinus bishop of Canoso; that they three did this without any mischief to themselves. But as miracles of this kind were more liable to exceptions than such as were performed upon un-

and wonders would attend those who were true converts to his religion; and promised them his daily protection † and assistance, even unto the end of the world.

Forty days was the time preordained for our Lord's continuance upon earth after his resurrection. These days were now almost expired, when the apostles (according as they were ordered), with some of their select friends, returned to Jerusalem, and there assembled themselves in a private place. Our Blessed Saviour came to them; and, among other things, (a) relating to the government of his church, gave them particularly in charge, that they should not depart from †² Jerusalem until they had received that miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost †³ which he had promised, and would shortly send down upon them. This effusion of the spirit the apostles imagined might possibly be an introduction to his temporal dominion, which still ran in their heads; and therefore they asked him whether he intended, at that time, to restore the kingdom to Israel? But he checked their inquiry, and gave them to understand, that, after the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them, they would have juster notions of these matters, and be sufficiently enabled to be the authentic witnesses of his life and actions * all the world

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

believers, (men being apt to think that there might be some antidotes against the venom of these beasts, or the pernicious effects of these draughts), it must be owned that Providence thought fit to be more sparing in affording these. *Calmet's Commentary, Hammond's and Whitby's Annotations.*

†³ Our Saviour's words are,—“Lo, I am with you always to the end of the world,” Matth. xxviii. 20. where we must observe, that this promise was made, not to all Christians in general, but only to those whom Christ authorised to teach and baptize in his name, as the words themselves, and the occasion of speaking them, plainly shew: And it contains a full declaration of our Lord's intention, that they should always be succeeded by others in the same office. For since the apostles all died within the compass of fourscore years after this extensive promise was made, it could no ways be fulfilled but by our Lord's being with their successors in the Gospel-ministry until the world's end. For what some imagine that the *συντελεία τοῦ αἰῶνος* relates to the end of the Jewish age or economy, which lasted (as they say) to the destruction of the temple under Vespasian, and so confine this promise to the persons of the apostles only, is void of all foundation, unless we can suppose that all sacred functions were to cease; neither baptism to be administered, nor the Gospel preached, after the destruction of Jerusalem; which is false in fact: And therefore, if we may be allowed to explain the design and meaning of this promise by the manner of its completion, we must conclude that our Lord here engages himself to be present with his ministers, both by his special grace and his authority, after the end of the Jewish economy, as well as till that time: And hence we may assure ourselves, that the ministry of the word and the administration of the sacraments are a standing and perpetual ordinance, to continue in the Christian church throughout all ages; and that all the faithful ministers of Christ, in what part of the world soever God shall cast their lot, and in what time soever they shall happen to live, may comfortably expect Christ's gracious presence with their persons, and his blessing upon their labours. *Archbishop Potter's Church Govern-*

ment, c. iv. and *Burkitt's Annotations.*

(a) Acts i. 3.

†² Of all places the apostles would least of all have chosen Jerusalem to tarry in, had not our Lord positively commanded them to continue there. For Jerusalem was now a place justly abhorred and detested by them, as reeking fresh with the blood of the holy and innocent Jesus; and yet Jerusalem is the place chosen by Christ for the pouring forth of his Holy Spirit upon his apostles; because there was the greatest company of spectators to behold it, and to be wrought upon by it; and because there had been the scenes of his greatest humiliation, and therefore there he was minded to shew forth his power and glory. *Burkitt's Annotations.*

†³ The reasons assignable for this wonderful dispensation, are, 1st, To enable them to be powerful witnesses of our Lord's resurrection, Luke xxiv. 48. and consequently that he was the true Messiah, or the prophet who was to come into the world, and was to be the Saviour of it: And therefore St Peter speaks thus to the Jews, “Ye have killed the Prince of Life, whom God had raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses,” Acts iii. 15. 2dly, To enable them to give an exact account (as far as Divine wisdom saw it necessary) of what our Saviour did and taught: and therefore himself tells them, that “the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, should testify of him, and bring all those things to their remembrance which he had said unto them,” John xv. 26.—xiv. 26. And, 3dly, To make them able ministers of the New Testament, i. e. able to acquaint Christians with all saving truths, and to teach them all things that Christ had commanded to be observed, throughout all the ages of the church; and upon the strength of this promise, all Christians, in all ages, have believed, that the apostles and writers of the New Testament, both spake and wrote as they were moved or directed by the Spirit of God, and accordingly have received their doctrines, “not as the words of men, but as they were in truth the word of God,” 1 Thess. ii. 13. *Whitby's Annotations.*

* Thus the apostles preached in the most considerable cities of the then known world, as at Antioch,

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over; and with these words he led all the company out of the city, to that part of Mount Olivet which was nearest to Bethany; and there, as he was lifting up his hands, and giving them his benediction, † while they continued all in an adoring posture, he was parted from them gradually, taken up in a cloud, and carried triumphantly into heaven †², where he now sitteth at the †³ right-hand of God, (a) "God blessed for ever." Amen.

Alexandria, and even at Rome itself, as well as at Jerusalem and Samaria. They taught at Athens, and Corinth, and throughout all Greece, in such towns as were most learned, most corrupt, and most idolatrous. It was in the presence of all nations, of Greeks and barbarians, of the learned and the ignorant, of Jews and Romans, of princes and their people, that the disciples of JESUS CHRIST gave witness of the wonders they had "seen with their eyes, heard with their ears, and touched with their hands," and particularly of their Lord's resurrection: Which testimony they supported, without any interest, and against all the reasons of human prudence, even to their last breath, and sealed it with their blood. Such was the establishment of Christianity! *Fleury's Church History.*

† The custom among the Jews was, to give the benediction to a good number or congregation of people, with an elevation and extension of the hands, as appears from the practice of Aaron, Lev. ix. 22. But to any particular person, the blessing was given with the imposition of hands, as the example of Jacob, with regard to Ephraim and Manasseh, plainly shews, Gen. xlviii. 14. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†² This must be understood of his human nature only, because the Divine nature fills all places, both in heaven and earth, and is, at all times, incapable of that which we properly call motion. The same body of Christ therefore, which was born, and suffered, and died, was actually carried up thither, and so our Saviour's ascension was no imaginary and figurative, but a real, proper, and corporal ascent into heaven, and that in the most elevated part, and noblest signification, that this word, at any time does, or can possibly admit: And therefore he is said to have "entered into the holy place," Heb. ix. 12. and to have "ascended up far above all heavens," Eph. iv. 10. into

the "presence of God, and where he was before," John vi. 62. So that, "whatever heaven is higher than all the rest which are called heaven; whatever sanctuary is holier than all which are called holies; whatever place is of greatest dignity in all those courts above, into that place did our Saviour ascend, where, in the splendour of his Deity, he was before he took upon him our humanity;" as our learned Bishop Pearson fully and elegantly expresses it; Art. 6. of the *Creed*, and *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii.

†³ This is one of those expressions wherein the Holy Ghost condescends to our capacity, by attributing to God the parts and gesture of a human body. The hand is the chief instrument of exerting our strength, and therefore often used to denote the power of God. The right-hand is the usual place of honour and respect, and therefore this denotes the highest dignity. Sitting, in like manner, intimates a state of ease and rest, and is properly the posture of those that are in power and authority, of kings upon their thrones, and magistrates in courts of justice; and therefore "Christ's sitting at God's right-hand" implies thus much,—"That the same bliss, glory, and power, which, as the Son of God, he did, before his incarnation, enjoy with his Father, from all eternity, his human nature is now made partaker of in the highest heavens: That this God-man is invested with an absolute authority, and boundless dominion, and does now, in both natures, rule, as he shall one day judge, the whole world; and that till that day come, it is the duty of us, and all mankind, to reverence and obey, to trust in and pray to him, as our only head and king, our rightful and universal Lord, *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii.

(a) Rom. i. 25.

THE OBJECTION.

“**BUT** surely it must be deemed some argument against this Divinity of Jesus, that, on several occasions we find him disclaiming all pretensions to it; owning himself to be no more than (a) ‘the Son of Man;’ acknowledging (b) an inferiority between him and the only true God; and, in some of the most momentous passages of his life, discovering himself to be no more than man, a man of the like passions and infirmities with us, but, in many cases, far short of that bravery and fortitude of mind which has been conspicuous in some heathen sages.

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

The hypostatical union, so much talked of (had there been any reality in it), must have certainly given Jesus a fore-knowledge of all events, though never so contingent, never so uncertain; and yet we find him declaring, that (c) ‘of that day and hour (viz. either of the destruction of Jerusalem, or his advent to the general judgment) knoweth no man, neither the angels which are in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.’

It is a known attribute of God, that as he is a self-existent and independent Being, the power which he has, he had from all eternity, inherent in himself, and derived from none other; but the case must have been quite otherwise with Jesus, as appears by his coming to his apostles, and with great joy telling them, that (d) ‘all power was given to him in heaven and earth.’ For when was it given? Not till after his resurrection; not until (e) ‘he had been obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, for which God highly exalted him;’ and therefore this is no obscure intimation, that he had no share of this Divine power committed to him before.

The most obvious notion we have of a Deity residing in human nature, is, that the person vouchsafed that dignation should be (if not exempt from all kind of miseries) enabled at least to bear them without anxiety: But what became of the power of this hypostatical union, when we find our Lord (f) ‘filled with fear and anguish,’ and, in the utmost consternation of mind, telling his three apostles, whom he desired to watch with him, that (g) ‘his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.’ When we find him in the garden, (h) ‘praying with such strong cries and tears,’ and in such an agony both of soul and body, that (i) ‘his sweat was like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.’ And, above all, when we find him reduced to such extremity, that (k) ‘an angel was detached from heaven to support and strengthen him;’ which certainly there would have been no occasion for (l) ‘had the fulness of the Godhead (of much superior efficacy, one would think, than any created angel) dwelt in him bodily.’

Where was this hypostatical union, we may ask, when our Lord, as he was hanging on the cross, sadly complained, (m) ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ And much more may we ask, where it was when he lay buried in the grave, a pale, senseless corpse, (n) wrapped in linen cloths, and embalmed with spices? It is the union of the soul, we know, that prevents the death of the body, and much more must our Lord’s death have been prevented by (o) such a conjunction of the Divine nature,

(a) Matth. xvi. 13.

(b) John xiv. 28.

(c) Mark xiii. 32.

(d) Matth. xxviii. 18.

(e) Phil. ii. 8, 9.

(f) Mark xiv. 33.

(g) Matth. xxvi. 38.

(h) Heb. v. 7.

(i) Luke xxii. 44.

(k) Ibid. ver. 43.

(l) Coloss. ii. 9.

(m) Matth. xxvii. 46.

(n) John xix. 39, 40.

(o) *Fiddes’s Body of Divinity*, vol. i.

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unless we can suppose that nature at any time torpid and unactive, which, in a Divine principle, is hardly within the compass of supposition.

However, since our Saviour was to suffer, and for this purpose came into the world, that he might (a) 'taste death for every man,' how is it that he happened to be more troubled at the apprehension of it (b) than was Socrates, and many other philosophers of old, who had learned not to be much afflicted with calamities, and suffered torments with an undaunted courage? He certainly knew what God had decreed, and himself had consented to, before his incarnation; and therefore, when he came to the point, for what reason was it that he altered his purpose, and desired of his Father a removal of the bitter cup?

If the ingredients of it were so very bitter, we cannot see what occasion there was for his drinking it at all, or why he should doubt of the possibility of its passing from him. For might not God forgive the sins of mankind without any such penal exactions? Or, if a sacrifice was to be offered, might not the death of a common man (admitted as a public representative) have done as well? When the love of God would have risen, in proportion to the lowness of the satisfaction he accepted, why should he be at the expence of parting with his only Son, and of redeeming us with the blood-royal of heaven?

But, after all, it is much to be questioned, whether we are really redeemed or no. For, even allowing that our proxy, Christ Jesus, was the Son of God, (c) yet were not his sufferings equivalent to the sins of mankind, forasmuch as the death which he underwent was only temporal, whereas the punishment which our sins deserved, and we, in our own persons, should have suffered for them, was death eternal.

If the satisfaction, however, hereby given to the Divine justice, was sufficient and complete, we ought not to make such an heavy outcry against Judas, for being an instrument in this transaction, especially since what he did he was in a manner compelled to do. (d) We read of this fact of his in a prophecy as high as the (e) Psalmist, who not only points out the thing, but likewise the person that was to do it; from whence it must follow, that this fact must have likewise been preordained, and made necessary to come to pass by the fate of a decree; and, if he was necessitated by the force of an irresistible decree, wherein was he to be blamed for doing it, since where there is a fatality in acting, there can be no choice, and where there is no choice, there can be no guilt?

But even supposing that Judas was guilty of an heinous offence in betraying his master, yet we cannot but think, that St Peter was every whit as culpable (f) in denying him, in denying him three times, with the sad formality of repeated oaths and imprecations; and yet it would make one wonder, why the one's repentance was accepted merely (g) for weeping a little at the remembrance of his offence, when the other's deep sorrow and remorse for his crime, his returning the wages of iniquity openly, his public declaration of our Saviour's innocence, owning his baseness, and taking the whole shame of his fault upon himself, met with no grace, but ended in his everlasting perdition.

Well was it for the penitent thief that he had better fate, (h) whose repentance, though begun upon the cross, and even after he had joined in reviling our Saviour, was immediately rewarded with a glorious reception into paradise. And this may teach us, that (whatever some may talk of the invalidity of a late death-bed repentance) God is disposed to receive the greatest sinners into the arms of his mercy, even though they be at their last gasp.

(a) Heb. ii. 9.
to Matth. xxvi.
xxvi. 70, &c.

(b) *Whitby's* Annotations on Matth. xxvi. 38.
(d) *Young's* Sermons, vol. ii.
(g) *Ibid.* ver. 75.

(c) *Whitby's* Appendix
(e) Psalm xli.
(f) Matth.
(h) Luke xxiii. 39, &c.

But though we are obliged to St Luke for this comfortable account of the penitent thief, yet we cannot but acknowledge, that St Matthew. (a) has committed an egregious blunder, when, in relation to the thirty pieces of silver that were given for our Saviour's blood, instead of Zechariah (b). in whom alone the prophecy is to be found, he cites Jeremiah, who has not one word concerning the whole matter.

From Matth. xx. 10 to the end, Mark xi. 15 to the end, Luke vi. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

But a misquotation in the evangelists may be easily excused, were they not chargeable with a misrepresentation of facts; as they certainly are, (c) when they talk of a total eclipse of the sun, at the time of our Lord's crucifixion, for three whole hours together, when it is confessed, that the sun and moon were in no conjunction then, and (even if they had been so) a darkness of so long continuance in any eclipse whatever is known to be contrary to the laws of nature: As they certainly are, when they resolve the infidelity of God's people, not into the perverseness of their own wills, but (d) either into the Divine predictions, or a judicial blindness and obduration brought upon them: (e) When they introduce our Lord with no more than a whip in his hand, (f) 'driving all the buyers and sellers out of the temple;' (g) cursing the poor fig-tree for having nothing but leaves upon it, when, according to their own acknowledgment, (h) 'the time of figs was not yet;' and, what is more still, cursing the (i) scribes and Pharisees, and giving them such hard names, when he could not but know that this was a gross violation (k) of his great precept of 'loving one another;' though how he comes to call this (l) 'a new commandment,' we cannot well conceive, since it is manifestly as old as Moses, in whose laws it is expressly required, (m) 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. I am the Lord.'

Whatever our Saviour might mean by (n) 'the abomination of desolation (spoken of by Daniel the prophet) standing in the holy place' (which has occasioned no small perplexity to interpreters), it is certain, that in the commission which he gives his apostles, he has furnished the antipædobaptists with an argument that will not easily be wrested from them, when he bids them (o) 'go, and teach all nations, before they baptize them;' and that the Romanists have too much to say for themselves, in behalf of the real presence, when, after the consecration of the elements, (p) he calls the bread his body, and the wine his blood. But the great point of all is our Saviour's resurrection; and happy had it been for the Christian cause, if the proofs of it had been made a little more public and convincing. For, whatever may be said in apology for St Thomas's incredulity (which, if it was causeless, was certainly very culpable), it cannot be doubted, but that, had our Lord appeared personally to the high priests and rulers after he was risen; made an open and triumphant entry into Jerusalem; and frequented the temple, and other places of public concourse, that every eye might see him, and receive full conviction for the time that he abode upon earth;—it cannot be doubted, I say, but that, in this method, he would have given the world fuller satisfaction than in remitting us to the testimony of his apostles, who were all his own creatures, and, consequently, evidences against whom we may make a just exception.

The materiality of our Lord's resurrection-body, and the reality of his ascension into heaven, are two points more, that, in this part of the Sacred History, we think, we have reason to call in question. For since (q) one known property of a body is, that it cannot penetrate through matter, without either cutting it or being cut; if Jesus, at his resurrection, assumed the same body that died on the cross, and was laid in the sepulchre, how come we to read, that (r) 'on the first day of the week, when the doors were

(a) Matth. xxvii. 9.

(b) Zech. xi. 13.

(c) Matth. xxvii. 45. and Luke xxiii. 44

(d) Matth. xiii. 14. and John xii. and 40.

(e) Woolston's Discourses on the Miracles

(f) Matth. xxi. 12.

(g) Ibid. ver. 19.

(h) Mark xi. 13.

(i) Matth. xxiii.

(k) John xv. 12.

(l) Ibid. xiii. 34.

(m) Levit. xix. 18.

(n) Matth. xxiv. 15.

(o) Ibid. xxviii. 19.

(p) Ibid. xxvi. 26, 28.

(q) Whitby's Annotations on John xx. 19.

(r) John xx. 26.

A. M. 4037,
&c. or 5442.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Ær. 33.
&c. or 31.

shut, he came in to his disciples (more than once), and stood in the midst of them? If his body, at this time, was real flesh and blood, it could never have penetrated through a more solid substance than itself; and therefore, we have reason to presume, that it was no more than a light aerial vehicle, that could pass through any crack or key-hole, and appear or disappear as it pleased.

And, in like manner, when we read in the same evangelist (a) ‘Touch me not (as our Saviour says to Mary Magdalene); for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God;’ upon the supposition that his body was material, we must from these words infer, that he ascended instantly after his resurrection; and as the joys of heaven, and ‘the bosom of his Father’ could not well fail to detain him, we must from hence conclude, that his seeming ascent from the Mount Olivet, afterwards was performed by some airy form or other which he appointed to personate him upon this occasion.”

ANSWER.

ST PAUL, in his epistle to the Philippians, argues, from the majesty of Christ’s Divine nature, to the greatness of his condescension in becoming the Son of Man, (b) “who being in the form of God (as he expresses it), thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man, and being found in the fashion of a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death” In this state of humiliation, it was highly proper and suitable to his character, to speak modestly of himself, and to make use of the lowest title that he had, as best becoming his present condition.

[But, though he generally called himself THE SON OF MAN, it is worthy of remark, that such was not the appellation given to him by his disciples. St Stephen indeed, some time after his ascension into heaven, gave him this title, when “he saw the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing in glory on the right-hand of God;” and hence it has, with great probability, been supposed, that the chief reason which induced our Lord to call himself so frequently THE SON OF MAN], was its being the prophetic name by which Daniel had described the promised Messiah. (c) “I saw in the night visions (says he), and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: [That this was a vision of the Messiah is acknowledged by the Jews themselves. At least R. Saadiah, as quoted by Dr Lightfoot (d), says, on these words of Daniel—Like unto the Son of Man—This is the Messiah our righteousness (Similis Filio hominis,—Hic est Messias Justitia nostra) But it is evident, that neither the prophet Daniel, nor the martyr Stephen, was speaking of the Messiah in the days of his humiliation, when they called him THE SON OF MAN; nor does our Lord himself always mean to express merely his own humility when he calls himself by this appellation. “As the Father hath life in himself,” said he on one occasion (e), “so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man.” Why, because he is the Son of Man, if the Son of Man was not a prophetic denomination acknowledged by the Jews to belong to the Messiah, who, according to them, was to raise the dead (f). It was in allusion therefore to his office, and not merely to assert either his human nature or his great condescension in becoming man, that our Lord so frequently called himself by this denomination. He claimed to be the Son of Man κατ’ ἐξοχην—that seed of the woman promised from the beginning, and of whom the promise was so often repeated by the prophets. Of the origin

(a) John xx. ver. 17.
tom. ii. p. 718. Ed. Roterodami.

(b) Philip. ii. 6, &c.
(c) John v. 27.

(d) Dan. vii. 13, 14.

(e) Oper. Omn.

(f) Whitby on John v. 27.

of the Messiah, as well as of the nature of his office, the Jews of that age entertained the most erroneous notions. We find them indeed declaring (a), that when Christ should come, no man would know whence he was; and their ambitious hopes of universal dominion are universally known. These errors our Lord endeavoured to correct by claiming to be the Messiah under the denomination of the *Son of Man*; for he thus recalled their thoughts to the occasion on which the Messiah was first promised; and taught them, on the authority of Moses himself, that the victories to be achieved by him were not over the Romans, but over that serpent, whose head the promised seed of the woman was to bruise by his own sufferings. It was in allusion to this, therefore, and to assert his claim to the office of the *Messiah*, that our Saviour so often called himself by a name, under which the prophet Daniel had described the Messiah.]

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

However this be, it is certain, that he is not so fond of the name of the Son of Man, as not to desire to be considered in the capacity of the Son of God likewise: For, when he put the question to his disciples, (b) "Whom say ye that I am?" And Peter, in the name of the rest, replied, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," he is far from being displeased with the answer, when he returns the apostle this compliment, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father that is in heaven."

Our Saviour indeed was so far from making any unnecessary declarations of himself, that (c), on some occasions, we find him labouring to conceal his Divine character, and charging his disciples to say nothing of it until his resurrection*; but, notwithstanding this, whenever he was fairly called upon, and especially by persons invested with authority, he never concealed it. When (d) "the Jews came round him in Solomon's porch, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly;" his answer is express: "I told you, and you believed not; the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me; for I and my Father are one." When he stood before the judgment-seat, and the high priest demanded of him, (e) "I adjure thee, by the living God, that thou tell us, Whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God?" His reply is, "Thou hast said," or (as St Mark (f) expresses it) "I am; and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right-hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Nay, there are some instances, wherein, of his own accord, and without any demand of this kind, he freely discovers who he was: For, having cured the man that was born blind, and afterwards meeting him accidentally, (g) "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" says he; whereupon the man asking, "Who is the Son of God, that I may believe on him?" our Saviour replies, "Thou hast both seen him, and lie it is that talketh with thee."

Though therefore our Blessed Saviour delighted much in the appellation of the Son of Man, yet as he did not upon that account decline the title of the Son of God, and had consequently two natures united in the same person, our business must be to dis-

(a) St John v. 27.

(b) Matth. xvi. 15, &c.

(c) Vid. Mark viii. 30. and Matth. xvii. 9.

* [The reason of his concealing his character on these, and similar occasions, is very obvious. Had the people been told in plain terms by himself in the beginning of his ministry, that he was the Messiah, though they could not have by force made him such a king as they wanted, they would undoubtedly have risen in rebellion, on his account, against the Roman government, from which they were ripe for a revolt. He would thus have been apparently involved in guilt; and have suffered, however innocent, as the

chief of an insurrection, like some false Christs who made their appearance about the same period. It was necessary therefore that he should correct the erroneous opinions entertained by his disciples relating to the office of the Messiah, before he publicly laid claim to that character; and therefore it was not till towards the very end of his ministry, that he made his triumphant entry into Jerusalem as the Son of David and the promised Messiah.]

(d) John x. 23, 24.

(e) Matth. xxvi. 63, 64.

(g) John ix. 35.

(f) Chap. xiv. 62.

A. M. 4037.
&c. or 5442.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Ær. 33.
&c. or 31.

tinguish between these two natures, and then we shall soon perceive the reason of our Saviour's informing his apostles, that "his Father was greater than him," viz. greater with respect to the Son's humanity, though, as touching their Divinity, they are perfectly equal; or greater, as he is the Father, and consequently the Fountain and Original of the God-head, though their nature and essence be one and the same."

(a) In the very notion of paternity and filiation, there is some kind of subordination implied; but then we are to observe, that this is not a subordination of nature and substance, no nor of essential attributes, or natural properties, but merely a personal subordination, founded on the personal properties: And, to be satisfied in this, we need only consider, that the communication of the essence upon which this subordination is grounded, is only a personal action, and not an act, or attribute of the Divine essence. To generate, and to be generated, are not essential attributes of the Divine nature, but merely personal acts of the Father and Son; and consequently the sole foundation of this subordination being merely in personal properties, the subordination itself, founded therein, can only relate to the personal, and not at all to the essential properties; for, notwithstanding the Son's personal subordination, he still continues with the Father "in substance equal, in majesty co-eternal."

[The difficulties, which have occurred in the contemplation of this most mysterious of all subjects, have arisen, in part at least, from understanding the words *Father, Son, substance, begotten, &c.* in too literal a sense. The greater part of words, in all languages, in their *strictly literal* sense, are applicable only to *material* substances, with their qualities and relations; and when applied to *mind* and its attributes, they are employed only to express something which we conceive to be *analogous* to certain well-known qualities, properties, or relations of bodies. Thus, though the word *understanding* expresses an attribute of mind, and has long ceased to be employed for any other purpose, yet is it obvious, from the *etymology* of the word, that it signifies something *standing under another*—or rather the *relation* which one of two things so placed bears to the other; but *under* and *over* denote the relations of *bodies* to each other, and cannot be literally applied to minds. *Substance* is a word of the same kind, signifying *literally* that which *stands under something else*. The words *Father* and *Son* likewise, in their original and *literal* sense, imply relations which can subsist only between living beings that have *bodies*, and cannot be applied *literally* to pure minds.

This being the case, we must not, when these words are applied to the God-head in a sense merely analogical, reason from them *in all respects* as when they are literally spoken of men; or infer, that, because a human son cannot be of the same age with his father, the Divine Son cannot have been begotten from all eternity by his Father. The analogy of the one relation to the other is, in some particulars, striking; but it extends not to every particular. I believe, though I wish, on this most sacred of all subjects, to hazard nothing new, that the words *Father* and *Son* were employed by the inspired writers, and the phrase *eternal generation* adopted by the fathers of the primitive church, to denote, as accurately as human language can denote, the absolute equality of the second person of the ever-blessed Trinity to the first in nature and perfections; and at the same time to express the *subordination* of the second to the first in a manner analogous to the subordination of a human son to his father. A man may beget a son equal to himself in ever perfection, though in the order of nature the son must be subordinate to his father; but, as an *artist*, no man can *make* any thing of equal perfections with himself. This phraseology therefore affirms in the plainest terms, that the Son of God is not a creature like angels, and the souls of men; and thus far the

analogy seems complete and perspicuous. But to express the co-eternity of the Son with the Father, recourse was had to another analogy:

In the Nicene creed, which I believe all churches have adopted, the generation of the Son of God is compared to the emission of light from the material sun; and he is said to be "begotten of his Father before all worlds; to be God of God, light of light, very God of very God, *begotten not made*." Now if the Newtonian theory of light be the true one; as it has been generally received from the earliest ages, and is certainly the most intelligible, it is obvious, that the material sun in the heavens never existed, nor could exist as the *sun*, without emitting rays of light; and that if it had existed from all eternity in its present state, it must have emitted rays of light from all eternity. These rays therefore would have been of the same substance with their source—the sun; co-eternal with it, and yet derived from it in a way that we may conceive to be analogous to eternal generation. As the material sun has always existed as the *source of light*, so has the first person of the holy and undivided Trinity always existed as the *Father of the second*; and the whole difference, in our conception, is, that the material son has existed as the source of light only for a limited time, whereas the first person of the Trinity has existed as the Father of the second from all eternity, *paternity* being as essential to him as *existence* *.]

From Matth.
xx. 10 to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

When therefore our Saviour seems to own his inferiority of knowledge, and to profess himself ignorant of some future events that the Father had reserved to himself, the meaning must be,—(a) Either that as man, he did not know beyond the capacities of an human and finite understanding, and not what he knew as God; or that as a prophet sent from God, he had no commission to declare it; and what was no part of his prophetic office, "he knew nothing of," i. e. had no instructions to reveal it: For that in this sense † the original word is sometimes taken, we may learn from that passage to the Corinthians, where St Paul tells his disciples, that (b) he had "determined not to know any thing among them," i. e. not to teach or instruct them in any point of doctrine, save "Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

"It was one thing therefore (says the learned (c) Lightfoot) to understand the Son of God, barely and abstractly for the second person in the holy Trinity, and another to understand him for the Messiah, or second person incarnate. To say that the second person in the Trinity is ignorant of any thing, is blasphemous: But to say so of the

* [I have employed the analogy suggested by the Nicene Fathers for the illustration of this mystery, as far as it can be illustrated; because it appears to myself more likely to be understood by the ordinary reader than that which was employed for the same purpose by Athenagoras and other Platonizing fathers of the primitive church. Whoever wishes to see the analogy by which *they* endeavoured to illustrate the doctrines of the *Trinity* and the *filiation* of the Son of God finely stated, will find it in *Bishop Horsley's Tracts* in controversy with Dr Priestley, particularly in the fourth Supplemental Disquisition; but let it never be forgotten, that these and all other analogies, which can be employed for the same purpose, are but very faint resemblances, if we may dare to call them resemblances at all, of what they are intended to bring, in some degree, within the reach of human comprehension. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?".]

(a) *Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah*, part ii. p. 60.

† The learned have observed, that the same verb, according to its several conjugations (as the Hebrew grammarians call them), may either signify an action, or the necessary concurrence of the author of that action, and that the conjugation *hiphil*, which properly signifies the concurrence of the author of the action with the action itself, is often used for the conjugation *kal*, by which the action barely, and the person or persons, who did it, are specified, without any additional sense, by which their special concurrence is to be understood. Thus *jada*, the root in *kal*, is only *he knew*, but *hodia* in *hiphil*, is *he made known*, and so on through the several tenses or times past, present, and to come. So that, according to this acceptance, what our Lord designed to acquaint his disciples with in Mark xiii. 32. was no more than this,—That neither the angels nor the Son intended then to make that day and hour known, but that the Father would in his proper time reveal it. *Wotton's Omiscience of the Son of God*, &c.

(b) 1 Cor. ii. 2.

(c) On Mark xiii. 32.

A. M. 4037,
&c. or 5142.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Ær. 53,
&c. or 31.

Messias (though he be that second person in the Trinity) is not so. For though the second person, abstractly considered, according to his mere Deity, be co-equal with the Father, co-omnipotent, co-omniscient, co-eternal with him; yet the Messias, who is God-man, considered as the Messias, was a servant and a messenger to the Father, from whom he received commands and authority," as himself frequently declared, (a) "that he spake nothing of himself, but that the Father, who sent him, gave him commandment what he should say, and what he should speak." Though therefore it plainly appears, both from the many prognostics which he mentions, and the exact description which he gives of the destruction of Jerusalem, that our Saviour could not but know the precise day and hour of its happening, yet this he might call one of (b) "those times and seasons which the Father had put in his own power," because he had received no order or direction for him to reveal it.

The generality of the ancients, however, run into the other notion, which arises from the consideration of the two natures in Christ, and therefore (with Cyril of Alexandria) they say, that he sometimes declared himself as God and sometimes as man, thereby to shew that he was very God and very man; that as he was pleased, in respect of his manhood, to suffer hunger and thirst, and other inconveniences of that kind, so he condescended to take upon him the innocent infirmities of it, (among which ignorance of future events is one) but this without any disparagement to his (c) "God-head, wherein are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;" and that, in short, he both knew and knew not when the day and hour, here spoken of, would come; the former with respect to his Divine, and the latter to his human nature.

This solution however does not please so well. For if we refer the day and hour (as they were primarily intended) to the destruction of the temple and city of Jerusalem, what signs and prognostics does our Saviour give his disciples of this great event? Why, he foretels them,—that "not one stone of all those glorious buildings should be left upon another; that there should be wars and rumours of wars, when nation should rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; that there should be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places; that false prophets and false Christs should arise, who should amuse them with destructive hopes of imaginary deliverances; that Jerusalem should be encompassed with a foreign enemy, who should at last make a final destruction of it, and of all that was therein; that the abomination of desolation should stand in the holy place, where, of all places in the world, it ought not to have stood; and that all these things should come to pass while some of the present generation were still alive." (d) Now, since all these things did literally come to pass, as our Lord forty years before had foretold that they should; since at the time of his foretelling them, the Romans were in peaceable possession of Judea, nor was there any prospect at all of the troubles and commotions which afterwards ensued; and since the completion of these prophecies is preserved to us by a Jewish writer, who himself was concerned in these very troubles, and did not record them with any design to gratify us Christians; can we imagine that Jesus Christ, who was this prophet, could possibly be ignorant of the day and hour when these predictions should be completed? Or rather, ought we not to think, that all he intended by that expression was to signify to his hearers, that it was then an improper time for him to reveal the particular period when that catastrophe was to overtake them? But two days after this his disciples own his Divinity, and acknowledge that (e) "he knew all things;" and (f) "all things that he had heard from the Father," or had a commission to declare from the Father, himself avers, that he had not failed to make known unto them; and therefore we may well presume that the individual day and hour when Jerusalem was finally to be destroyed, as it was a

(a) John xii. 49.
the Son of God.

(b) Acts i. 7.
(c) John xvi. 30.

(c) Collos. ii. 3.
(f) Ibid. xv. 15.

(d) Wotton's Omniscience of

matter of no concern for them to be acquainted with, so was it no part of his instructions from heaven to let them into a minute knowledge of it; that in the signs and forerunners which he had discovered to them, he had said enough to put them, and all considering men, upon their guard; that fuller and more particular indications of the time (as things then stood) were by no means proper, for though they might possibly be able to (a) bear his words, yet others might be tempted to make an ill use of them, contrary to his original meaning.

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke vi. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

It is to be observed, however, that in regard our blessed Saviour had the Divine and human nature both united in one person, great caution must be used in observing his actions and affections, that we do not mistake in assigning any of them to a wrong principle. (b) For as those works of wonder, which exceeded or controlled all the powers of created nature, must be attributed to a principle Omnipotent and Divine; so, in those others which relate either to joy or sorrow, subjection or exaltation, he must be understood to proceed upon a principle purely human, and that the faculties of the Divine nature were, in such cases, totally suspended.

Now, it is certain that the perfections of the Divine nature will admit of neither any increase nor diminution of its power and greatness. The author to the Hebrews (c) applies to our Saviour Christ these words of the Psalmist, (d) "Thou, O Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hand;" and surely he, who created the world, and (e) "without whom not any thing was made that was made." could not fail of having from all eternity a sovereign power both in heaven and in earth. It is not in respect of his Divinity therefore, that our Lord speaks of his enlargement of power, but of his human nature, which, in reward of his obedience and humiliation, (f) "was highly exalted, and obtained of God a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

It is equally certain, that the Divine nature is not capable of any grief or sorrow, or other perturbation of mind, arising from an apprehension of some imminent danger, or a sense of some incumbent calamity; and therefore, when our Saviour complains of the vast load of sorrow that lay heavy upon his spirits, and almost quite sunk them down, this he must be supposed to say with regard to his human nature only, because his Divine was exempt from all such suffering. But then, the question is, from what particular cause it was that all this sorrow and fear and consternation of mind (for † so the original words import) could possibly arise?

(g) Those who impute all this to nothing more than a natural dread of pain and death, have this difficulty to contend with, that how grievous soever these things may be, especially to sinful flesh and blood, yet they are such as have been corrected by reason, and, in their most tremendous shapes, borne with great patience and resignation of mind; and therefore it can hardly be imagined, that the prospect of a crucifixion could have raised such commotions in a soul which had the testimony of a good conscience

(a) John xvi. 12.

(b) *Stanhope's* Sermons on several occasions.

(c) Heb. i. 10.

(d) Psal. cii. 25.

(e) John i. 3.

(f) Philip. ii. 9, &c.

† The words in the original are three,—*λυπεῖσθαι*, *ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι*, and *ἀδημονεῖν*. The first *λυπεῖσθαι* is of a known and ordinary signification; but in this case it is to be raised to the highest degree of significance, as appears by the words which follow, *περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχὴ μου ὡς θανάτου*, Matth. xxvi. 38. So that it does not only signify an excess of sorrow, surrounding and encompassing the soul, but also such as brings

a consternation and dejection of mind, bowing the soul under the pressures and burden of it. The second *ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι*, in the vulgar Latin, is *pavere*, but according to the Greek idiom bears a much stronger sense, and signifies indeed the highest degree of fear, horror, and amazement. The third, *ἀδημονεῖν*, denotes the consequences of excessive fear and sorrow, i. e. anxiety of mind, disquietude, and restlessness. *Pearson* on the Creed.

(g) See *Stillingfleet's* Sermons, *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. ii. and his Sermons on several occasions.

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to support it, and a glorious reward set before it, to make a full recompence for what it suffered.

(a) Others are of opinion, therefore, that this excessive sorrow and dejection of mind were occasioned by the perfect and penetrating light which then diffused itself in our Saviour's mind all at once, concerning the guilt of sin, and the wrath of an incensed God; that the horror of these filled and amazed his vast apprehensive soul; and that these apprehensions could not but affect his tender heart, full of the highest zeal for God's glory, and the most relenting compassion for the souls of men: "For if the true contrition of one single sinner, (b) say they, bleeding under the sting of the law, only for his own iniquities, cannot be performed without great bitterness of sorrow and remorse, what bounds can be set to that grief, what measures to that anguish, which proceeded from a full apprehension of all the transgressions of so many millions of sinners?"

(c) This is the most common solution: And yet there is something in the context which has induced others to think, that on this occasion the devil and his angels had collected all their force, in order to fill our Saviour's mind with the most dismal, terrifying scenes of horror, thereby to divert him from his intended enterprize. For, 1st, we may observe, that before he entered the garden where this agony seized him, he expected some terrible assault from these infernal powers, and therefore he tells his disciples, "the prince of the world cometh (d), i. e. is now mustering up his legions to make his last effort upon me; but this is my comfort, that he will find nothing in me, no sinful inclination to take part with him, no guilty reflection to expose me to his tyranny. 2dly, That when the disciples entered the garden with our Lord, he gave them a strict charge (e) "to watch and pray, that they might not enter into temptation;" which plainly implies, that at that time and place, there was some occasion for a more than ordinary application to these duties; and this cannot so well be imputed to any thing else, as those numbers of evil spirits who were going furiously to assault their Master, and would not altogether spare them. And, 3dly, that when the three elect apostles were a little advanced with him into the garden, he earnestly intreated them to watch with him; and yet we find them suddenly asleep, and no sooner awoke, but asleep again and again; for the text tells us, (f) "that their eyes were heavy;" which prodigious drowsiness of theirs, upon so momentous an occasion, cannot be ascribed to any thing so well as to a preternatural stupefaction of their senses, by some of these infernal spirits now conflicting with their Master, and who, perhaps, to deprive him of the solace of their company, did, by their diabolical arts, produce that extraordinary stupor which oppressed them, that so, having him alone, they might have the greater advantage to tempt and terrify him.

These observations make it highly probable, that this his last agony was occasioned by a mighty struggle and conflict with the powers of darkness, (g) who having, by God's permission, mustered up all their strength, intended once more to try their fortune against him, and to this purpose surrounding him, very probably, with a mighty host, exerted all their power and malice in persecuting his innocent soul; in distracting it with horrid phantasms; in afflicting it with dismal suggestions; in vexing and tormenting it with dire imaginations and dreadful spectacles; and, in short, in practising all the arts and machinations that their malice and subtilty could invent, to tempt and deter him, if possible, from his gracious design of redeeming mankind.

(h) Had our Lord, indeed, in this conflict been assisted with any succour from his Divinity, this would have set him far above the opposition of any created power; but

(a) *Pearson on the Creed, and South's Sermons, vol. iii.*

(d) John xiv. 30.

(e) Matth. xxvi. 41.

(h) *Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. ii.*

(b) *Ibid.*

(f) *Ibid. ver. 43.*

(c) *Scot's Mediator.*

(g) *Scot's Mediator.*

(that the second Adam might make a reparation for the fall of the first, and in that very nature left to itself, and unassisted by any foreign aid, vanquish the enemy that had given it so grievous a foil before) the Divine perfections lay by, as it were, and forbore to engage: They withdrew their influence for that time, and, suspending their operation, left him to encounter as man, though much more perfect than any other man.

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

Putting all these dismal and distracting things together then, the apprehension of a cruel and ignominious death, the sense of the guilt and heinous nature of sin, the prospect of God's wrath, the combination of devils, and the suspension of the Divine power and protection, we need not much wonder that we find our Blessed Saviour in the garden complaining, that "his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death;" or on the cross, crying out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" That we find him, in the midst of his agony, "sweating out blood" in great abundance; deprecating death with more vehemence than some heathen sages, and many Christian martyrs did; and when his spirits were thus depressed, his human nature quite exhausted, and no relief from the Divine afforded him; that an angel should be sent "from heaven to revive and strengthen him." For when the Divinity, which resided in him, had either suspended, or substracted its influence, he, who, in respect of his manhood, (a) "was made a little while inferior to the angels," and, in respect of his sufferings, was now in a more distressed condition than ever man knew, being left to his human nature alone, could not but stand in need of the comfort and consolation of an angel.

All this while the Divine nature of Christ (though it did not think fit to exert itself) (b) was inseparably united to the human; nor can we conceive why it should not still continue, even after death, in the same manner united, since no power has any force against Omnipotence, nor could any finite agent work any alteration in that union. To understand the nature of this union, we must observe, (c) that in the person of Christ, after the assumption of our nature, there were two different substantial unions; one of the two parts of his humanity, his soul and body, whereby he was truly man; and the other of his Divine and human nature, whereby he was both God and man in one person; and that, though at his death the constituent parts of him as man, i. e. his human soul and body were parted, and so continued for some time, yet the union of his two natures still remained; * death made no alteration in that, nor were his soul and body ever separated from the Godhead, but as the Divine nature still subsisted, they still continued in conjunction with it: Upon which account, as we are taught to believe that God redeemed us with his blood, so has it been the constant language of the church, that God died for us; which in no sense could be true, unless our Blessed Saviour's soul and body, in the instant of separation, and until their conjunction again, were united to the Deity. And therefore, when we hear him crying upon the cross, (d) "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" he means the same thing as when he calls upon us to (e) "behold, and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." For from the words we can infer no more than this,—that he was then bereft of such joys and comforts as he expected from the Deity, to assuage and mitigate the acerbity of the torments he was under. The truth is, what seems to solve all difficulties best,

(a) Heb. ii. 7.

(b) Pearson on the Creed, Art. iv.

(c) Ibid.

* The words of St Austin are very full and excellent to this purpose. "Ex quo verbum caro factum est, ut habitaret in nobis, et susceptus est à verbo homo, i. e. totus homo, anima et caro: Quid fecit passio, quid fecit mors, nisi corpus ab anima separavit? Animam vero à verbo non separavit. Si enim mortuus

est Dominus,—sine dubio caro ipsius expiravit, animam (ad tempus enim exiguum anima deseruit carnem, sed redeunte animâ resurrecturam) à verbo autem animam separatam esse non dico. Latronis animam dixit, hodiè mecum eris in Paradiso. Fidelem latronis animam non deserebat, et deserebat suam? Absit: Sed illius ut Dominus custodivit, suam vero inseparabiliter habuit." Tract in Joh. 47.

(d) Matth. xxvii. 46.

(e) Lam. i. 12.

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is the ancient notion of the Godhead's being quiescent, and not exerting its power and efficacy in such instances where the humanity is known to have suffered. In this manner it confessedly withdrew at his death; otherwise we cannot see how he could have died at all; and in this manner, by parity of reason, it might continue its quiescence during the whole space of his interment, and until its power and operation were requisite in order to effect his resurrection.

As our Blessed Saviour then was both God and man in one person, and the efficacy and mystery of man's redemption consisted in this union; (a) it was necessary that there should be a clear and undoubted demonstration given of the reality of both these natures. But since the distinguishing marks of human nature lies chiefly in the soul, there had not been that demonstration given of our Saviour's perfect humanity, unless he had discovered, in his conduct, an exact resemblance to us in all the natural passions and inclinations of our souls. Now in this soul of ours there is a twofold principle, sense and reason. Sense catches at the present; pursues ease and safety; and industriously consults the preservation and advantage of the body; whereas reason enlarges our prospect; takes into consideration distant and future objects; and persuades the foregoing of some satisfactions, the running of some hazards, and enduring of some difficulties in the discharge of our duty, and the expectation of a greater good in reversion. Under the former of these are comprehended all our natural passions, which are the secret springs that move us to what we do; under the latter are the understanding and judgment, which direct, and regulate, and bound, and overrule these passions. But still both these are constituent parts, and as necessary to make a perfect soul as the rational soul and human body are to make one perfect man; and from hence it follows, that the weakness and corruption of our nature (as it stands depraved by sin) does not consist in our being tenderly touched with the fear of present evil, or the desire of present good, but only in suffering these fears and desires to prevail and take place against the dictates of reason and duty.

Aversion to pain and conflict, to sorrow and death, and whatever is shocking and frightful to human nature, are affections interwoven with our original frame and constitution. Adam, in his state of innocence, felt them; and therefore it is no just reflection upon the second Adam, that he, in like manner, felt them too. Infirmities indeed these aversions may be called, in comparison of those perfections which belong to God and unbodied spirits; but then they are such infirmities as all who partake of bodies must have, and which, if our Saviour had been destitute of, he could not have been truly man.

Now if Christ, as man, could not be altogether indifferent and unconcerned at such severe trials as the imposition of the burden of our sins, the infliction of pain and torment, his approaching conflict with the powers of darkness, and the utter subduction of all Divine aid and assistance, must necessarily bring upon him; then surely it could not misbecome him to use all possible means for declining them, and consequently to express his concern by praying against them, but with this modest reserve and limitation, (b) "Nevertheless not my will, but thine be done." For it was no disparagement, either of his obedience to God or love to mankind, that he had an aversion to death, and pain, and sufferings, but in truth an higher commendation to both, since, notwithstanding so tender a sense of what he was to suffer, he offered himself to undergo whatever God, for their benefit and salvation, should think proper to lay upon him. So that the more passionate his wishes were for a release, the more meritorious was his submission; and the stronger his aversions were, the more was the resignation of his own will, and consequently the more acceptable was his compliance with that of his heavenly Father.

(a) *Stanhope's Sermons* on several occasions.

(b) Luke xxii. 42.

His heavenly Father, no doubt, could (a) have exempted mankind from punishment, without an equivalent compensation for their guilt. As an All-wise Being he could have invented many methods of salvation, without the sacrifice of his Beloved Son; and as a Supreme Lawgiver, he might have extended mercy to whom, and upon what terms he thought fit: But then, as he was the Supreme Lawgiver and Governor of the world, it was consistent with his justice, and his infinite wisdom, we may say, required it of him, to vindicate the authority of his laws, and to see sin punished, in such an exemplary manner, as to deter, if possible, his subjects from it for the future.

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
he end.

Now this was the state and condition of mankind when God's infinite wisdom contrived the scheme of their redemption. They had alienated themselves from him; were under sin, under condemnation, under the curse of the law, under the sentence of death. In this condition, however, they were not to be left to perish; God's infinite goodness would not permit that: But then, how to accomplish their recovery, and preserve his attributes inviolate, this was the difficulty. For how, in consistence with the glory, and justice, and sanctity of God, could such enemies be reconciled, and such offenders pardoned? Would omnipotent Majesty think of any treaty, without an Advocate and Intercessor? Would the Sovereign Ruler of the world suffer his honour to be slighted without a proper vindication? Would the great Patron of justice relax the terms of it, and permit wickedness to pass unpunished? Would the God of truth reverse his decree, and stop the sentence of death from falling upon sinners? Or would the God of righteousness omit any opportunity of expressing the love he bore to innocence and abhorrence to iniquity? How then could we well be cleared from our guilt without an expiation; or reinstated in freedom without a ransom; or exempted from condemnation without some vicarious punishment*? No, God was pleased so to prosecute his designs of goodness and mercy, as not in the least to impair and obscure, but rather advance and illustrate the glories of his sovereign dignity, of his severe justice, of his immaculate holiness and immutability, both in word and purpose.

He was willing to listen to a treaty, but from the mouth of no mediator but such as was of equal dignity with himself. He was willing to remit the punishment due to our sins, but not without a sacrifice that would make full atonement for them. He was willing to give us back our lives again, but not without a substitution of another life equivalent to them all. But now how could these things be done? Where could we find a Mediator proper and worthy to intercede for us, and to negotiate a new covenant, whereby God might be satisfied and we saved? Who could offer for us a sacrifice, of value sufficient to atone for sins so vastly numerous, and all committed against infinite Majesty? Or who could undertake for the everlasting redemption of all the souls since the first creation, and lay down a competent price for them? Nothing on earth, nothing in heaven was found able to do this.

Man, the most innocent and upright man, could by no means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him. Angels have obligations enough of their own to discharge, and cannot be solvent for any more than the debt of their own gratitude and praise. The brightest of that heavenly host cannot, over and above this, make compensation for one human sin; but for the sins of the whole world united, there was no propitiation to be found, until the Son of God offered himself, and was accepted by the Father. Our humanity he assumed, to enable him to suffer and interest us in what he did; but the Divinity which he had with the Father from the beginning, this he brought with him, to derive an infinite value upon his sufferings, and to make the ransom and

(a) *Stanhope's Sermons* on several occasions.
* [Vicarious suffering would have been a more proper expression, because the very notion of punishment implies consciousness of guilt.]

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oblation which he paid down for us, a full satisfaction for sins innumerable and infinitely heinous.

In the expiation of these sins, we own that the punishment which our Saviour submitted to was but temporal, whereas that to which sinners are obnoxious is eternal; but for that several good reasons may be alleged. The author to the Hebrews, in his comparison between the Levitical and Christian dispensations, tells us, that (a) "such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and who needeth not daily (as the high priests under the law) to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for those of the people;" so that what qualified him to offer a sacrifice for the sins of mankind was his perfect innocence; for had he been, in any degree, a sinner himself, he must have suffered for his own offences, and consequently been incapable of effecting an expiation for ours.

(b) Now, if our Blessed Saviour was entirely innocent and holy, it was impossible that he should suffer the same punishments which, by the just decree of God, are due to wilful and impenitent sinners. (c) He could not do it in his body; for that could only die by what he suffered on the cross: And he could not do it in his soul; for how could that soul, which knew no sin, be under a remorse of conscience for any thing that he had done? How could he (d) "who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross," lie under any sense of God's unchangeable displeasure? Or he, who knew that (e) "his soul should not be left in hades; nor his body see corruption," be seized with an absolute despair of any better state, or an uneasy apprehension of no release from what he was to suffer? The punishments of the damned are without end, and without hope: But everlasting misery and despair could never be consistent with the condition of one who had not deserved them, and whose innocence secured and preserved him from them. These are the consequences of sin and rebellion against God; but the sufferings of Jesus were the greatest proof of an entire obedience in the most difficult instance of submission, and so far from incurring the Divine displeasure, that, for this very cause, (f) "God hath highly exalted him."

But though, from the nature and reason of the thing, it appears, that our Lord neither did, nor could suffer such punishments, in kind and measure, as were due to sinners; yet it must be observed, that he underwent such things as bore some analogy to what sinners are to suffer, and what he would not have suffered had he not been punished for our transgressions.

(g) For whereas sinners lie under the sentence of condemnation, and are sure to find a public exemplary judgment; so was our Saviour solemnly condemned and sentenced as a malefactor, a seditious person, a perverter of the nation, a rebel against Cæsar, and a blasphemer against GOD. Whereas sinners will be exposed to shame and ignominy, at the great day of judgment, before men and angels; so our Lord suffered a very shameful and ignominious death, and that attended with all the mockeries, affronts, and obloquies, that the malice of his enemies could cast upon him. And whereas sinners are obnoxious to very grievous torments both of body and soul, and these inflicted by the hand of an enraged God; so, in his person, our Lord suffered a death, painful to such a degree, as to make the most exquisite tortures be called *cruciatu*s from the cross; and, in his mind, such a load of grief and anguish, as might well justify the mournful complaint of the prophet, (h) "All ye that pass by, behold, and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me, in the day of his fierce anger."

Now, from this fair resemblance between what our Lord actually suffered, and what

(a) Heb. vii. 26, 27.
Appendix to Matth. xxvi.
(g) Whitby's Appendix.

(b) Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. ii.
(d) Heb. xii. 2.
(h) Lam. i. 12.

(e) Psal. xvi. 10.

(c) Whitby's
(f) Philip ii. 9.

sinner had deserved to suffer, there seems to be sufficient ground to say, that he bore the punishment of our iniquities, and suffered in our stead; though what he underwent was not, in every point, the same that we (had it not been for his interposition) must have been obliged to suffer.

(a) All that was requisite indeed in his sufferings was, that the injuries and affronts offered to the Divine justice, by the provocation of wicked men, should receive a sufficient compensation; that the honour of God and his laws should be vindicated; and sin made as terrible, and full of discouragement, as it could possibly be, though no such method of mercy had ever been devised. Now all these ends were fully satisfied by the Son of God condescending to suffer in our stead; and if there was any thing wanting in the duration or extremity of his sufferings, that was abundantly made up by the dignity of the person, "who through the eternal Spirit," i. e. the Divine united to our human nature, (b) "offered himself without spot to God," and in virtue of that union exalted the value of his oblation to an infinite degree, and paid a ransom to offended justice of more worth than an hundred thousand worlds.

But how great soever the benefit was which accrued to mankind from the death of our Saviour Christ, there is no apologizing for those that were the bloody instruments of it, and least of all for Judas. For, besides the aggravation of his being a disciple, a friend, a constant companion, one that had been taught and sustained by him, and not only an hearer of his doctrine, and an eye-witness of his miracles, but, in virtue of the commission received from him, a preacher of the gospel, and a worker of miracles himself; besides all this, I say, it is evident, that his wickedness was not the effect of a sudden surprise, or want of recollection, but the work of deliberation, and long contrivance, and solemn debate: For he consulted with the high priests and elders concerning the time, the place, and every circumstance, for the most convenient execution of his villany. After such consultation, he continued his attendance upon his master, that, under the disguise of friendship, and by much laboured hypocrisy, he might better carry on his design to destroy him; and as his design was advancing to maturity, he had all along had broad hints and monitions given him, that his plot was discovered, and many warnings of the sin and danger he was running into, but none of these altered his purpose. So that, in this act of his, there is a complication of ingratitude and perfidy, hypocrisy and malice, and a settled inflexible resolution to do wickedly, beyond the power of advice and warning, and the most awful menaces to controul it: And this might be some reason why his repentance met not with success, as it is evident it did not, from our Lord's calling him (c) "the son of perdition," and declaring, that (d) "it had been better for him if he had never been born."

(e) The evangelists indeed tell us, (f) that he repented himself; but then it is evident, that by repenting is not everywhere intended a change of heart and life; nor the whole of that which repentance strictly signifies, when made the condition of pardon and salvation, but only some part and imperfect degree of it. Judas found that matters were grown to so desperate an height, that there was no probable appearance of his Master's escaping the malice of the Jews; and recollected, very likely, the predictions of our Lord concerning the dreadful vengeance which should overtake the person that betrayed him to death. These, and probably many other dreadful reflections, working together with all that confusion which fear and guilt are known to create in mens minds, seem to have made up that concern which the text hath expressed by repenting himself; a concern resulting from a principle of self-preservation, in the most carnal sense of the word: But we find not in him any due sense of the villany of the fact, nor any condemning himself, as the basest, the most ungrateful, the most abandoned wretch

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

(a) Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. ii.
(d) Matth. xxvi. 24.

(e) Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. ii.

(b) Heb. ix. 14.

(c) John xvii. 12.
(f) Matth. xxvii. 3.

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alive; one that had violated the laws of God, and society, and nature, and cast all fidelity and gratitude, and common humanity, behind his back. All which, and a great deal more, were not only aggravations due to his crime, but the very properest occasions of remorse.

He felt indeed some regret for what he had done (as an awakened conscience cannot fence off such reflections), and he wished perhaps he had never done it; but the regret which he felt, seems rather to have been the effect of confusion and rage, than any godly relenting; the agonies of frenzy, and amazement, and despair, which are the most distant things in the world from that sober and regular sorrow, (a) "which worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of."

Herein then lay the defect of Judas's repentance, that the horror of his sin led him into despair. For repentance, we must know, does not barely consist in sorrow for sin, but in such a sorrow as is tempered and supported with hope; not in a mere confession of our transgressions, but in such a confession as trusts and depends on forgiveness; and, as it imports a change of manners, unless we are first persuaded that our sincere endeavours for the future will be kindly received, and our former transgressions generously passed over, all ground and encouragement for such a change is utterly taken away.

Reason indeed cannot lead us to infer, that sorrow for the past, or amendment for the time to come, can be any equivalent satisfaction for our offences; but revelation assures us, that God may be appeased, and it hath told us withal in what manner he is appeased, even by the precious blood of his Son, "who came to give his life a ransom for many." In this matter God hath declared himself so fully, that the very heinousness of our sins is not a greater provocation than the distrust of mercy (which, in effect, is making God a liar, and disparaging the merits of Christ's sacrifice) after we have committed them. So that hope of mercy, and faith in the promises, and satisfaction of Christ, are the very life and spirit of true repentance, essential and indispensably requisite to quicken and recommend every part of it. And therefore no wonder if Judas's repentance proved so ineffectual, which was plainly destitute of these necessary qualifications.

If it be enquired, how Judas came to be wanting in this point? The immediate cause, no question, was, that God had forsaken him, and withdrawn his grace from him. But then if we pursue this enquiry still farther, and drive it up to its true fountain-head, the matter will fall upon Judas himself as the proper and original cause of his own misery and destruction.

For whatever we may think of the doctrine of predestination, it is certain, that the miserable Judas was not aware of any power in it to sustain his mind, when he came to reflect on what he had done. He could not interpret, that the foreknowledg of God had any causality or influence upon his sins, because he found cause enough for that arising from his own deportment: (b) For, having given way to a covetous desire, and hardened his heart by a sinful indulgence of it against all impressions of wholesome counsel, he was convinced, that the prophecy of his treason could not fail of its event, because, when the temptation offered, he could not chuse but do what he did. He had indeed lost all his power and liberty to do better, though still the necessity which he then lay under was not fatal, but natural; not of God's decreeing, but of his own procuring. Under these juster apprehensions of his crime, he is said to have repented, in the worst sense of the words, i. e. he grieved, he despaired, and then he hanged himself. And though we allow that his passions transported him too extravagantly in these latter violences, yet even from what was rational in his grief, we may learn this lesson, — "That when an awakened conscience comes to estimate the nature of its guilt, there

(a) 2 Cor. vii. 10.

(b) *Younge's Sermons*, vol. ii.

will be found but poor shelter in all those palliations that can be formed by human subtilty and licentious wit."

The aggravations of St Peter's offence, in denying our Lord, are much of the same kind with that of Judas in betraying him. That a person who, for the space of three years and more, had the honour of our Lord's conversation, the conviction of his miracles, and the instruction of his doctrine; who had been let into the knowledge of those mysteries which, for wise reasons, were delivered in parables, and concealed from others; admitted to his transfiguration upon the Mount, his converse with Moses and Elias, and to hear that voice from God's excellent glory, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," (a) as himself testifies; that a person who, hereupon, had made confession of his Master's Divinity, and received his commendations for it, had been chosen a companion of his agonies, and forewarned frequently of the great danger of denying him; and hereupon grown so very resolute, that he offered (b) "to go with him into prison and to death," and to distinguish himself above any of his brethren, (c) "Though all should be offended, says he, because of thee, yet will not I be offended; and though I were to die with thee, yet would I not deny thee:"—That a person, I say, placed in this rank and elevation, should fall off in the time of trial; should deny and abjure his Master, whose greatest honour it was to own, implies a guilt still more heinous, the more his knowledge and former conviction, the more his warning and long experience, the more his professions and boasted firmness of mind were conspicuous.

This however may be said with relation to the difference between the crime of Judas and that of St Peter, that the former proceeded from a spirit of malice, and fixed resolution to do evil, occasioned by a sordid and covetous temper; that it was nourished up by long contrivance and deliberation, was carried on by hypocrisy and deep dissimulation, was executed with perfidy and great violence, and ended, at last, in the agonies of horror and despair; whereas St Peter's crime, though a very great one, was but of a short continuance, and never in his intention at first; was indeed the effect of fear and human infirmity, occasioned, in a great measure, by surprise and want of recollection; not so much the act of the man, as it was the force of the temptation he was under; and therefore, when he (d) "came to remember the words which Jesus had said unto him," and thereupon to consider how shamefully he had fallen from his courage and constancy; how easily he had been betrayed into a crime he thought himself not capable of; how base he had been to so kind a master, how false to his promises, how regardless of truth, how peremptory in a most notorious falsehood, and how profane and profligate in his oaths and curses;—when he came to consider all this, I say, a godly sorrow swelled his heart, and tears gushed out of his eyes: "He went out, and wept bitterly." [It must be confessed, however, that instead of going out and weeping bitterly in private, he ought to have confessed his sin, and proclaimed his Master publicly before all in whose presence he had denied him; but this would have been a degree of perfection to which he was not then equal, though he fully reached it afterwards. He seems indeed to have been left to himself in that trying emergency, and afterwards received into favour, to shew to the governors of the church, how they should conduct themselves towards such of the faithful as might apostatize, through mere human frailty, in those dreadful persecutions, which our Lord foresaw would be brought on his disciples for his name's sake.]

Judas, in like manner, might weep for his transgression perhaps, but his tears must have been ineffectual, because the season of that grace, which he had long resisted and defeated, was departed from him, and God provoked to give him over to his own perverseness; whereas our Saviour, who foresaw from what principle St Peter's offence

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

(a) 2 Pet. i. 17, 18.

(b) Luke xxii. 33.

(c) Matth. xxvi. 35.

(d) Ibid. xxvi. 75.

A. M. 4037.
&c. or 5142.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Ær. 33.
&c. or 31.

would arise, and how sudden his conversion would be, (a) "had prayed for him, that his faith might not fail," and thence his recovery did proceed. We should be injurious however to the memory of this apostle, if we should here neglect to relate how his after-behaviour shewed the sincerity of his repentance, and made an ample amends for the scandal of his offence.

(b) It was this same St Peter who, after our Lord's resurrection, returned to the fervour of affection for which he was remarkable before; that so exerted himself at the day of (c) Pentecost, and proved, by irrefragable arguments, that Jesus Christ was the Son of God; that maintained his point against the Jewish rulers, (d) despising their rebukes and angry menaces, and telling them plainly, (e) that "God was to be obeyed rather than man;" that confirmed his brethren by his resolute behaviour, and (f) made it a matter of rejoicing, that he was "accounted worthy to suffer shame" for the once abjured name of Christ. In a word, it was he who, after a long labour of preaching, and persecutions of all kinds, at length finished his course, and glorified God by the same sort of death that his Blessed Son condescended to undergo for our sakes. So that St Peter was not more different from himself, when trembling at the voice of a silly damsel, than the same St Peter afterwards, the glorious and invincible apostle, before the council, in prison, and upon the cross, was from the cowardly and infamous renegade in the high priest's palace. This settled and deliberate fidelity was a noble compensation for the infirmity and transports of this fall. This shewed what the man was, when perfectly himself, and supported by the grace of God, as the other did, what he was, when naked and destitute of heavenly succours, depending upon his own strength, and left in the hand of his own passions.

St Paul (g) represents our Saviour "as a merciful high priest, because he was touched with a feeling of our infirmities;" and as it is natural for us to compassionate those that are in the same state of misery with ourselves, so might our Lord, from the society of suffering, have been induced, at this time, to admit the penitent upon the cross into a participation of bliss, who, at another time, would not have met with so ready a reception. (h) It might therefore be no small advantage to the penitent thief, that he happened to die in company with Christ, though it is certain, that the good disposition which he discovered in his behaviour and confession was enough to recommend him to the Divine mercy.

It is highly probable, that this man never knew any thing of Jesus before, otherwise than by common fame; nay, that he was prepossessed against him as an impostor, and joined with his companion in reviling him at first; and therefore the greater was his virtue in overcoming these prejudices so soon, and in suffering the meekness and patience, the charity and piety, of our Lord's miraculous death to disabuse him. This is so far from making him a late penitent, that it gives him the glory of an early convert; one whose heart was open to the first impression of grace, and wanted, not so much the inclination, as the opportunity of embracing the truth before.

But admitting that he had seen and heard of Christ before, yet, that he should now come in to the acknowledgment of him, and believe him to be the Saviour of the world, when one of his disciples had betrayed, another had denied, and all of them had forsaken him; and proclaim him to be the Son of God, and Lord of life, when he was hanging on the cross, suffering the pangs of death, and seemingly deserted by his Father: That he should take sanctuary in a dying and universally despised man, publish his innocence in the face of triumphant malice, and, through the thickest cloud of shame and suffering that ever intercepted the glories of the Son of God, discover his Divine power,

(a) Luke xxii. 32.
(d) Ibid. iv. 19, 20.
(h) Taylor's Life of Christ.

(b) Stanhope's Sermons on several Occasions.
(e) Ibid. v. 29.

(f) Ibid. ver. 41.

(c) Acts ii. 14.
(g) Heb. iv. 15.

acknowledge his celestial kingdom, throw himself upon his protection, and call upon him as the great disposer of rewards and happiness after death. This was a confession so resolute, so singular, so illustrious, as never was outdone, as never can, in all respects, be equalled, except the same Jesus were again to be crucified: For no man's conversion ever had, ever can have, upon other terms, such disadvantageous and discouraging circumstances as this man laboured under, and yet so generously overcame.

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

Well therefore might (a) St Chrysostom (as he does with great force and eloquence) rebuke the impudence of those late penitents who presume to take sanctuary in this example: For what affinity, what shadow of resemblance, is there between a man submitting to the first impression, and accepting of offers as soon as made; and one who has lived under the ministry of the Gospel, and enjoyed both the outward calls of God's word, and the inward solicitations of his Spirit, but turned the deaf ear continually to both? Between a man who to our Lord paid the highest degree of homage and respect, even when he had made himself of no reputation, and appeared in the guise of the vilest malefactor; and one who, notwithstanding his resurrection from the dead, and exaltation to glory, notwithstanding the conquest made by the gospel, and the infamy of denying him now, continues still to injure and affront, to despise and defy him in his most prosperous and triumphant condition?

In a word, no Christian who hath lived under the dispensation of the Gospel can, at the end of his days, plead the same ready compliance to the calls of grace, and no man whatever can have the opportunity of exerting the same vigorous faith; because Christ could die but once, and it was his shame and suffering alone that made the confession of this penitent so peculiarly glorious, and such as the whole series of a pious life in other men can hardly parallel. So that if we are allowed to make any use, or to draw any consolation from this example, it can be no more than this,—That repentance, when true, is never too late; and therefore the thief upon the cross is a sovereign antidote against despair. But men may out-stay the day of grace: They may not go about the work until it is too late; until they have lost both the will and the power to repent; and therefore this example, when truly considered, is an excellent preservative likewise against presumption.

It may be deemed perhaps some mistake in the evangelist, or rather a disparagement to the Holy Spirit, by whose direction, we say, it was he wrote, that St Matthew cites Jeremiah for a passage which nowhere occurs but in the prophet Zechariah; but then it should be proved that St Matthew does actually cite Jeremiah. (b) In most of the Latin and Greek copies, indeed, we have the word Jeremiah at present, but it is much to be questioned whether it was in the original; since the Syriac and Persic versions mention no name but barely the prophet; and those copies, in (c) St Austin's opinion, are most to be relied on which have not the name of Jeremiah inserted in them, because this might possibly proceed from the ignorance or carelessness of some transcriber. (d) Some of our modern reconcilers have another way of accounting for this. They endeavour to prove (e), from the writings of the Jewish Rabbins, that, both before, under, and after the second temple, the order of the Sacred Books was several times transposed, and that in the time when St Matthew wrote his Gospel, the book of Jeremiah (as does now that of Isaiah), stood first in the volume of prophets, and so became the running title of all the rest: For that the first book in a volume may give the name to the rest, is obvious, say they, from the words of our Saviour's telling his disciples, that (f) "all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning him:" where,

(a) Tom. v. orat. 7.
Evang. tom. iv. lib. iii. c. 7.
Test. apud. Matth.

(b) Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, part ii.

(c) De Content.

(d) Lightfoot, in Loc. and Surenhusius, in Conciliat. in Loc. ex Vet.

(e) In Cod. 1almud. Bava Batra, fol. 14. col. 2.

(f) Luke xxiv. 44.

A. M. 4037,
&c. or 5442.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Ær. 33,
&c. or 31.

by the word psalms, he means all the hagiographa, consisting of hymns to God, and documents of life, and are all so called, because in that part of the division of the Old Testament they had obtained the first place.

But as there are no words cited in the like manner from any other prophet in the whole New Testament (*a*), others have imagined, that the passage which St Matthew quotes, was originally in the authentic copies of Jeremiah, but that by the malice of the Jews it was erased, because it was looked upon as too plain a prophecy of this circumstance of our Saviour's life; or rather, that it was recorded in a certain apocryphal book of Jeremiah's, from whence St Matthew took it. That there was such a book extant is evident from the testimony of St Jerome (*b*), who expressly tells us, that he read the very words here quoted in an Hebrew volume, communicated to him by a Jew of the Nazarene sect: And, that it was no disparagement to cite an apocryphal book, is manifest from the practice of the apostles, who make mention (*c*) of Jannes and Jambres, though they nowhere occur in canonical Scripture; who quote (*d*) the prophecy of Enoch, though generally reputed an apocryphal book; nay, and produce the sayings of Aratus (*e*), Epimenides (*f*), and Euripides (*g*), though these were profane heathen authors: For though such books, say they, were not received into the canon, yet they might nevertheless contain such truths as were worthy of belief.

Those, however, who have compared the writings of these two prophets together, have observed, that Zechariah was so close an imitator of Jeremiah, as to give just occasion for the saying of the Jews, viz. "that the spirit of Jeremy had passed into Zechary, and so, both together, made but one prophet:" And from hence others have concluded, that the ixth, xth, and xith chapters of Zechariah were not wrote by him, but by Jeremiah, though at present they go under the other's name. The Book of Psalms, we know, though the whole collection be called David's, contains many pieces that were not of his composition. In that of Proverbs, there are several wise sentences (besides those of Solomon) ascribed to (*h*) Agur, the son of Jaketh, and to (*i*) the mother of king Lemuel; and, by parity of reason, these chapters of Zechariah might originally have been written by the prophet Jeremiah, though, in process of time, they happened to creep in among the works of his great imitator.

And indeed, whoever looks into the contents of these chapters, will soon perceive that such things are related in them as are inconsistent with the time wherein Zechariah lived, but very well agree with that of Jeremiah: That what he says, for instance, (*k*) of the pride of Assyria being brought down, "and the sceptre of Egypt being departed," could not be foretold by him, because these events were then passed and gone, but might very well be predicted by Jeremiah; that what he says (*l*) of Gaza and Askelon, as cities then in being, could not be recorded by him, forasmuch as these places were destroyed long before his days, but might properly enough be mentioned by Jeremiah, because in his time they were subsisting; and that the earthquake (*m*), which he alludes to, in the days of Uzziah, was of too distant a date to be remembered in his time, though it is not unlikely that tradition might have transmitted the report of it down as far as the days of Jeremiah. If then there be found in Zechariah things inconsistent with his time, but such as comported very well with the period wherein Jeremiah lived, it is natural to think, that though the whole book went under another's name, yet still such parts of it as contained these things, must have been written by a person with whom they were coincident; and that therefore St Matthew is so far from committing any blunder, that he makes a very valuable discovery in ascribing the prophecy now before us to its proper author.

(*a*) Vid *Calmet's Commentary*, *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah*, part ii.
(*b*) In Matth. xxvii. 9. (*c*) 2 Tim. iii. 8. (*d*) Jude ver. 14. (*e*) Acts xvii. 28.
(*f*) Tit. i. 12. (*g*) 1 Cor. xv. 33. (*h*) Prov. xxx. 1. (*i*) Ibid. xxxi. 1.
(*k*) Zech. x. 11. (*l*) Ibid. ix. 5. (*m*) Ibid. xiv. 5.

Thus, take it which way we will, we cannot justly accuse the evangelist of any mis-quotation, and much less can we charge him with any misrepresentation of a matter of fact, in his making our Blessed Lord able enough to drive all the buyers and sellers out of the temple. St Jerome (*a*) indeed reckons this one of the greatest miracles that ever our Saviour did, and imputes his ability to do it to a certain Divine Majesty which, at that time, appeared in his looks, and struck the company with such a reverential awe and respect to his person, as restrained them from making any opposition: But without having recourse to any thing miraculous in this transaction, we need only remember, that our Lord was just now come up from Bethany to Jerusalem in a sort of royal and triumphant procession; that he was attended on the road, and into the city, with (*b*) "a very great multitude, nay, with multitudes that went before and followed after;" that these all went along with him into the temple, and proclaimed (as they had done on the road) "Hosanna to the Son of David!" and that the concourse, in short, was so great, that (*c*) "all the city was moved, and even the chief priests were afraid of him, and of the people too, because they took him for a prophet, and (*d*) were attentive to hear him."

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

Now it is no hard matter to imagine, that the people, seeing our Saviour proceed to the temple in this triumphant manner, might seasonably enough call to mind the prediction of the prophet Malachi, (*e*) "The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, in whom ye delight, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer to the Lord an offering of righteousness;" and that from the remembrance of this prophecy, they might be encouraged to abet his reformation of the temple. (*f*) Nor is it to be doubted but that a consciousness of guilt in the profaners themselves might, in some measure, contribute to their submission and acquiescence, even in the same manner as his enemies were struck backwards with the sense of their own guilt, as well as the majesty of his appearance, and fell to the ground when they came to apprehend him in the garden. So that, upon the whole, we are to consider our Saviour in this action, not in the form of a despised man, but of a triumphant monarch rather, at the head of an infinite number of people, all rejoicing in the completion of an ancient prophecy, all acknowledging him for their Messiah and king, and thereupon all ready to support him in any reformation that he should think proper to attempt.

The like is to be said of the relation which the evangelists give us of the darkness which happened at our Lord's crucifixion; that it is far from being a misrepresentation of the matter of fact, since we have it confirmed (*g*) by the testimony of Phlegon, who, in the xivth book of his *Chronicles*, tells us, that in the 4th year of CCIIId Olympiad, (which answers exactly to that of our Lord's death) "there was the greatest eclipse of the sun that had ever been before, insomuch, that at noon-day the stars were seen in the sky;" by the authority of Thallus, (*h*) a Greek historian, who, in his third book, speaks of the darkness that accompanied our Saviour's death, and which he, in like manner, called an eclipse; by the appeal which Tertullian (*i*) and others make to the Roman archives, (where the account that Pilate sent to Tiberius of the miracles which happened at our Lord's passion was deposited) for the truth of this prodigious darkness; and, (*k*) lastly, by the general consent of all Christian authors for the space of the six first centuries, who, in treating this subject, have constantly made mention of this testimony of Phlegon and Thallus, together with this appeal to the Roman records, without the least hesitation or diffidence of their truth: So that the only difficulty is, to know by what means this strange phænomenon was effected.

(*a*) In Matth. xxi. 12. (*b*) Ibid. ver. 8, 9. (*c*) Ibid. xxi. 10. (*d*) Luke xix. 48.
 (*e*) Mal. iii. 1, &c. (*f*) Bishop *Smallbrooke's* Vindication, p. 146. (*g*) Vid. Orig. cont. Cels. lib. ii.
 (*h*) African. Chronogr. (*i*) Apolog. c. xxi. (*k*) *Whiston's* Testimony of *Phlegon* Vindicated.

A. M. 4087.
&c. or 5412.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Ær. 33,
&c. or 31.

Phlegon and Thallus indeed, as they are cited (a) by Christian writers, seem to make this darkness a common eclipse, occasioned (as others are) by an interposition of the moon between the sun and the earth, and thence some have inferred that there was nothing extraordinary in it: But as it is a thing very well known, that the Passover (when our Lord suffered) was always appointed at the full of the moon, and a thing naturally impossible that an eclipse should happen when the moon is in this condition, we have reason to think that this was an hasty conclusion which these two authors made, without ever bethinking themselves of the rules of astronomy; that finding in the public records of the time of Tiberius, an account of a prodigious darkness, which, at noon-day, made the stars appear in the firmament, this they supposed could have been effected only by an eclipse of the sun, and upon such supposition, affirmed that it was so: But for one circumstance unwarily advanced, it were madness to reject their testimony, which, in other respects, exactly agrees with the account of the Sacred Writings.

Others, by the manner of their expression, seem to imply, that the sun, upon this occasion, with-held its rays, and, as it were, eclipsed itself, by restraining its lustre from issuing forth; never considering that light in the sun is no accidental thing, nor any quality which it can suppress or exert as it thinks proper. To shine is as necessary to it as is its being: Nor can its rays meet with any obstruction but when some opaque body or other intervenes between us and them; and therefore, when the fathers, in conformity to the style of the Scripture, say, that the sun or the stars withdrew their shining, this must be looked upon as a figurative and popular manner of expression, which seems to give these celestial bodies a kind of free action, thereby to make us more sensible of the absence or suspension of their effects.

Others, therefore, with more probability think, that as the Sacred History says nothing of the sun, this darkness which it takes notice of was occasioned by a great number of condensed clouds, which, gathering in the air, intercepted the light of the sun, and for the space of three hours produced the same effect that once happened in the land of Egypt, a darkness that might be felt. This hypothesis makes the matter very easy, by placing the whole miracle in the quick formation of the clouds at such a point of time, and the speedy dispersion of them after such a continuance*; only we must suppose, that (b) by the whole earth, which the evangelist tells us was covered with this darkness, we are to understand the land of Judea only, in which sense the phrase does not unfrequently occur in Scripture.

And indeed, (c) as the other wonderful things which came to pass at our Saviour's passion, such as the trembling of the earth, the rending of the rocks, the opening the graves, and tearing the vail of the temple, were transacted at Jerusalem, or at most in Judea only; so have we reason to believe, that the darkness which accompanied these miracles was of no greater extent than they; because the chief design of this uncommon appearance in the heavens was to convince the Jews, who blasphemed our Lord,

(a) *Calmet's Dissert. sur les Tenebres.*

* [This is a very unphilosophical solution of the difficulty, if indeed there be any difficulty in the case, and such as cannot be admitted by common sense. If the rays of the sun were intercepted merely by a congeries of *dense clouds*, how came the feebler rays of the stars to penetrate those clouds which were impervious to the rays of the sun? The darkness was unquestionably miraculous, of which therefore no other account is to be given than that it was produced by the immediate interposition of God, as all other miracles have been; but what is now known of the constitution of the sun, renders it unnecessary to imagine either that masses of dense clouds, which indeed

would not have answered the purpose, were interposed between the land of Judea and the sun; or that the moon was carried out of her course, and then rendered stationary for three hours in order to cause this preternatural darkness. If the sun be such a body as some philosophers seem to have lately ascertained it to be, the darkness might be produced, and produced over *all the earth*, merely by an aperture of the luminous atmosphere made much larger than those which are now known to produce the dark spots observed occasionally in the surface of the sun.] See vol. i. p. 22, &c. of this Work.

(b) *Ἐπὶ παντὶ τῇ γῇ* Matth. xxvii. 45.

(c) Origen. in Matth. tract. 35.

and his disciples who believed on him, both then present at his crucifixion, that notwithstanding all the humiliation to which he voluntarily submitted, he was in reality the Great Creator of the universe; and * even while he was hanging on the cross, the ruler and director of all its elements and motions.

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

God indeed, as he is an omniscient Being, cannot but foreknow all the actions of mankind, and therefore, when he pleases, may foretel any of them; but then (*a*) if his foreknowledge or predictions did so far influence the will of men, as to lay them under a necessity of doing what he foreknows, or has foretold they shall do, all freedom in human actions must be destroyed; consequently all vice and virtue must be empty names, because no one can be blamed for doing what he could not help, nor does any one deserve to be praised who does only that which he cannot avoid: And consequently, again, all future rewards and punishments must be discarded; because as it would be unjust to punish one man for that which was not in his power to avoid, so would it be unreasonable to reward another for doing such actions as he found himself constrained and compelled to do.

[It is indeed very difficult for us to conceive how the future actions of free agents can be foreknown, because we have no other notion of knowledge, than that which we acquire by reflecting on what passes within our own minds, when we contemplate either abstract truth or the events which we distinctly remember. We certainly cannot discover what are to be the future actions of free agents; but God's knowledge is not as our knowledge, or at least his *means* of knowledge are not at all like those which we possess. If we infer that the future actions of free agents cannot be known to him, only because they are not known to us, we must deny his omniscience of what is doing at present, as well as his prescience of what shall be done hereafter. God is indeed said to be present to all his works, and so indeed he unquestionably is; but *how* is he present to them? Dr Clark and his followers suppose that the Deity, though immaterial, is diffused through the universe; but this hypothesis, if employed to explain the *manner* of God's omniscience, is fraught with innumerable inconsistencies and contradictions. Whatever is extended, is, at least mathematically, divisible into parts, so that one part or portion of it must be conceived to be in one place, and another part or portion in a different place. If every part or portion of this extended Deity be, as the hypothesis requires, intelligent and percipient of those things to which it is immediately present, and of nothing else, then it is not true that the *Deity*, as one individual Being, is present to and perceives all things that *actually* exist; but that one portion of such a Deity perceives one thing, and another a different thing; and so on through the whole extent of the universe. Surely this conclusion, which follows necessarily from the hypothesis, as the hypothesis is built on the supposition that God actually perceives, as we perceive only such things as are locally present to us, instead of being an explanation of the omniscience of the Deity, is nothing else than a farrago of impious absurdities.

The truth is, that extension cannot be predicated—cannot be either affirmed or denied—without absurdity, of any intelligence, whether supreme or subordinate; and

* From the astronomical tables, some that are versed in this kind of knowledge have informed us, that on the same day, when our Saviour died, about three in the afternoon, i. e. immediately after the miraculous darkness, which began at noon, and lasted three hours, there was a natural eclipse of the moon, in which half of its orbit was obscured: So that this day produced a literal accomplishment of two remarkable prophecies; that of Joel, "The earth shall quake

before them, the heavens shall tremble, the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining," chap. ii. 10. and that of Amos, "In that day, saith the Lord, I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and will darken the earth in the clear day, and I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation," chap. viii. 9, 10, Calmet's Commentary.

(a) *Whitby's Annotations on John xii. 38.*

A. M. 4037, that we might, with as much propriety say of pain, that it is of some particular *colour*,
 &c. or 5442. as we can say of any intelligence that it is of small or great *extent*!
 Ann. Dom.
 Vulg. Ær. 33, The *manner*, therefore, in which God is present to his works, and perceives the ac-
 &c. or 31. tions which men and angels are now performing in every region of the universe, is as

utterly unknown to us, as is the *manner* in which he may perceive the actions of free agents to be performed a thousand years hence. Yet that he is present to all his works, and privy to all the thoughts and actions of men and angels, has never been called in question by any Theist, though all the attempts to explain *how* he is everywhere present (at least all such attempts as have fallen under my observation) are involved in absurdity and contradiction. To comprehend indeed *how* God knows at *once* (and at *once* he must know or be growing daily wiser) all that *has been, now is, or ever shall be*, would require an intellect infinite as his own; but the following observations may perhaps tend to satisfy the reader, that to an intellect of absolute perfection all this is possible.

Every wise and scientific artist, who is to construct a complicated machine, a clock or watch, for instance, first contemplates the nature of the object which he has in view, and the materials on which he is to work for its attainment; he then ideally forms these materials, and views them all by his mind's eye as fitted to each other and in motion, considering well to what accidents the several parts of his machine will be most liable, and taking what measures appear to him most likely to avert such accidents, and render the time-keeper fit for the purpose which he intends it to serve. An experienced artist has as distinct a view of such a machine and of all its movements, before a single wheel of it is formed, as after it is all put together and in motion; and may not the omniscience of the Supreme Being have had a view, analogous to this, of the whole universe, and of every movement in it, whether of mind or of matter, before a single part of it was called into existence?

With respect to the corporeal motions of the universe, and the conclusions of the understanding when employed in the contemplation of abstract truth, it will readily be admitted that he may, because these are all necessary events; but it is more difficult to conceive how the actions of free agents, who have the origin of their actions in their own minds, can be known before they be actually performed. Still it seems to be possible, and *obviously* possible, to a mind of absolute perfection. If all the free agents, that ever were, and ever shall be in the universe, have ideally performed their several parts in the Divine intellect before one of them was actually brought into being, (and this seems to have been the opinion of the ancient Platonists), even their freest actions must have been as perfectly known to God before the creation of the world, as they could be after the actions themselves were really performed. The scientific artist is not better acquainted with the movements of a complicated machine, when viewing it in actual motion, than he was when contemplating it in idea, before a single part of it was formed from the rude materials; and God was at least as well acquainted with the powers and dispositions of all the men and other free agents, whom he was to create; with the stations in which they were to be placed; and with the temptations to which they were to be exposed, as the artist is with the several mechanical powers and forces, with the nature of the wheels and other parts of his time-keeper, with the friction, which he is aware tends to wear out these wheels, and with the accidents to which the machine is liable, and by which it may suddenly be destroyed. Such knowledge as this, if it be possible in itself, (and to me it appears very possible to a mind of infinite perfections), would not in the smallest degree interfere with the liberty of men, or influence their conduct either to good or evil *.]

* [This question I discussed at considerable length in the *British Critic*, vol. 40. p. 238, &c. against a most respectable writer, who had publicly denied the possibility of knowing or predicting the future actions

When therefore we find the evangelists declaring, that (a) "the Jews could not believe, because Isaiah (b) had said, God had blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts," we must not suppose that this prophecy was either the cause or motive of their infidelity. It was simply a prediction; and, as such, laid upon them no manner of necessity or compulsion. Such prophecies indeed always include a tacit condition, which preserves to man the liberty of choice; and if, in their event, they prove certain and infallible, it is only because God certainly and infallibly foreknows the future bad dispositions of the people of whom he speaks; and has a clear prospect of that blindness and obduration which their perverseness brings upon them.

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

In relation to the Jews in particular, it is certain that our Blessed Saviour did not think that his Heavenly Father had, by any action or prediction of his, made it impossible for them to believe on him; (c) for, had he thought so, he would never have exhorted them (as we find he does in the verses just going before) (d) "to walk in the light, and believe in the light whilst they had it;" and to this good purpose, that they "might become the children of light;" because every exhortation to do a thing which we know to be impossible, must not only be vain and delusory, but (if we know that impossibility to proceed from a Divine judicial act) repugnant likewise to the will of God, which, to suppose our Lord capable of, is the height of blasphemy.

Since therefore, in the eastern phrase, a person is said to do that which he only permits to be done, God's blinding the eyes, and hardening the hearts of the Jews, must mean no more, than his suffering them to blind their own eyes, and harden their own hearts; which, upon the mere subduction of his grace, without the infusion of any perverse inclinations from him, they would not fail to do. And, accordingly, we may observe, that the same evangelist, in another place, speaks of their obduration and blindness as their own act and deed; for (e) "this people's heart is waxen gross, says he, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed, lest, at any time, they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Whoever considers the series of the Sacred History, may soon convince himself, that the miracle which our Saviour wrought on the barren fig-tree happened about the eleventh day of the Jewish month Nisan, on Tuesday, very probably, before the passover; for the passover, we know, was kept on the fourteenth day of Nisan, which answers to the latter end of our March; and that, at this time, there were figs in Judea ripe, and fit for gathering, we have some authority to believe.

When Moses sent away the spies to search the land of Canaan, it was, we are told, (f) "in the time of the first ripe grapes, and (g) they returned from searching after forty days," and brought from thence (h) "pomegranates and figs, as well as clusters of grapes." Now the Septuagint version says, that it was in the spring when these spies set forward; and Philo, in his life of Moses, seems to be of the same opinion. Supposing then that it was about the middle of the spring (which, in Judea, began about the middle of January) that the spies set out, and that they were gone forty days, it will follow, that they returned some days before the passover; and if the figs, which they brought, as well as the grapes, were ripe and full grown, then were they ripe in Judea in the very same time that our Saviour is here said to look for them.

Solomon, in his book of Canticles, gives us a lively description of the spring, and, among other signs of its being come, makes mention of this,—That (i) "the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines, with their tender grape, give a good smell,

of free agents; and the reader will there find much more on the subject than I have room to insert here.]

(a) John xii 39, 40.

(b) Isaiah vi. 9.

(c) John xii. 35, 36.

(d) *Whitby*, Ibid.

(e) Matth. xiii. 15.

(g) Ibid. ver. 25.

(h) Ibid. ver. 23.

(i) Cantic. ii. 13.

(f) Numb. xiii. 20.

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&c. or 5442.
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&c. or 31.

or (as it may more literally be rendered) the fig-tree hath begun to give a flavour to her young figs, and the vines a good smell to the tender grape." Now if, in the middle of our January, the figs were so forward as then to give a flavour, it is reasonable to think, that, in so warm and fruitful a climate as Judea was, there might be ripe ones about the latter end of March, which is the precise time when our Saviour sought for them upon this fig-tree.

The truth is, there were in Judea fig-trees of different kinds; and, besides the ordinary sort (which, (a) according to our Saviour, did not put forth its leaves until the near approach of summer), the Jewish writers make mention of one early kind in particular (called by them Banoth-shuath), which never wanted leaves, and very seldom fruit. Nay, Pliny (b) tells us of some sort of fig-trees in Syria (under which name he frequently comprehends Judea) that had always leaves, and when the fruit of the preceding year was gathered, the new fruit began immediately, and was growing all the winter long; and therefore we need less wonder at what the emperor Julian asserts, viz. that, at Damascus, in Syria, there was a sort of fig-tree, whose fruit, both old and young, grew together, and lasted beyond the year: From all which we may be allowed to conclude, that there might be figs in Judea fit to eat at the time when our Saviour went to look for some on this tree: And for this reason some have (c) imagined, that without offering any great violence to the text, the original words οὐ γὰρ ἦν καιρὸς συνῶν, for *where he was, or, in the place he then was in, the time of figs was come.* And this, by the way, is enough to vindicate our Saviour in what he did, since there could be no injustice to the owner (as some would suggest), in ridding the ground of a tree which only encumbered it, and sucked its nourishment from it, without making any return*.

Without entering into *2 any other solutions: If there were two sorts of fig-trees in Judea, the one much earlier than the other, and thence two seasons of ripe figs, the one much later than the other, and (as it is natural to suppose) the later much more common and plentiful than the former, the later was properly called the time of figs; and the evangelist might very truly say, that, at the time of the passover, it was not yet come, i. e. the common and ordinary season for figs was not come; though, admitting

(a) Mark xiii. 28.

(b) *Natural History*, lib. xiii. c. 8.

(c) *Universal History*, lib. ii. c. 11.

* [There is, however, not the smallest occasion to deviate from our English version, in order to vindicate the conduct of our Saviour. "We are assured by Dr Shaw, that in Barbary, and no doubt in the hotter climate of Judea, after mild winters, some of the more forward trees will now and then yield a few ripe figs, six weeks or more before the full season." Such trees are undoubtedly known by their foliage; and it seems to have been one of such trees that fell under the curse of our Saviour. "Seeing (says the evangelist) a fig tree afar off, having leaves, (unquestionably such leaves as indicated it to be a forward tree) he came, if *haply* he might find any thing thereon,—for the time of figs was not yet." It was not yet the season when figs were *generally* gathered, and therefore there was a possibility that no ripe figs might be found on that particular tree; but its foliage indicated that it was one of those forward trees which yield ripe figs at least six weeks before the full season; and therefore, that if none should be found on it then, none would be found on it afterwards, the tree being barren.] See *Shaw's Travels*, p. 142.

** There is one, however, which we must not in this place forget to mention, viz. That by "the time of figs," may well be understood "the time of gathering them," when they were full ripe, and must be gathered, otherwise they would fall from the tree; and that the words, "for the time of figs was not yet," do not refer to those immediately foregoing, "when he came to it he found nothing but leaves," (which ought to be included in a parenthesis), but to the sentence that went before he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon, as he might very reasonably expect, because the fig time, i. e. the season when figs were wont to be gathered, was not yet come, i. e. he came to the tree before people had gathered their figs. For we must observe farther, that on the second day of unleavened bread, i. e. about five or six days after our Saviour's coming to this tree, the first fruits of all that were then ripe were solemnly presented in the temple; nor were the owners of any trees permitted to gather in their fruits, until that day was come; and, consequently, if no fruit trees were as yet gathered, (upon supposition that this fig-tree was of the early kind) our Saviour is not to be censured for expecting to find something on it. *Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah*, part ii.

this to be one of the early kind, our Lord might well expect to find something upon it, since, by the speciousness of its leaves, it looked so promising at a distance.

He, without all doubt, knew perfectly well, before he went up to it, whether it had any fruit on it or no; but as he intended to work a miracle upon it, and, by its speedy withering away, emblematically to shew his disciples the near approaching ruin of the Jewish nation, be it what it would, it answered his main end; but then it could not have been so fit a type and resemblance of the Jews, had it not been barren, nor exhibited their fate in so lively a manner, had it not been cursed, and so withered away.

The Jewish nation indeed, at our Saviour's coming, was, in all degrees and orders of men, sadly corrupted; but in none so much as in the scribes and Pharisees, who, pretending to be the doctors and expounders of the law, had vacated the obligation to almost all moral honesty, by the introduction of their false glosses and comments. Their great shew of outward sanctity, however, much ostentation in their prayers and piety, and punctual performance of the ceremonial part of their religion, gave them great authority among the people, and as high a conceit of themselves; insomuch that they expected a blind submission to their injunctions, and all imaginable tokens of respect and veneration, whenever they appeared in public; though, all this while, their pretended sanctity was but a veil to cover their vices, and inward impurity; an art to gain a reputation, by making the best of the shadow, while they wanted the substance of godliness.

Now, if such was the depravity of the scribes and Pharisees when our Saviour lived among them, none can doubt, but that as he was a teacher sent from God, he had a proper authority to reprove them, since, under the Mosaic law, this was a duty incumbent even on private persons, and what they could not, without a manifest breach of charity, decline: For (a) "thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him." Where we may observe, that in the eye of this law, not to rebuke our brother is interpretatively to hate him; and therefore our Saviour stands in need of no farther apology for reproving the scribes and Pharisees, who had such a number of sins upon them, since there was no omitting that without violating his command.

In his rebukes indeed, there seems to be a spirit of severity, something that looks like anger, and several terms of diminution and disrespect. But then it should be considered, that as anger is a passion implanted in human nature, in itself, and upon all occasions, it cannot be unlawful; nay, when employed about proper and deserving matters, such as the honour of God, and reverence due to his laws, the love of virtue, and the correction of vice, it is not only innocent, but highly necessary and commendable. For there is a tameness of spirit which deserves censure; and in such cases as these, we even do well when we are angry.

(b) In like manner it may be observed, that terms of disparagement and reproach are, in some cases, allowable, and more particularly when men (as St Paul expresses it) (c) "are rebuked sharply to render them sound in the truth." From the mouth of a superior they are often of use, sometimes of necessity to rouse and awaken stupid men; to make them more effectually both sensible and ashamed of their follies; to expose the horrible absurdity of pernicious opinions, or the flagrant enormity of wicked practices, and in short, are hardly ever discommendable where charity is at the bottom, and an high authority in the reprover gives such language countenance.

Now, as none can call in question our Saviour's authority, if he thought it convenient to make use of such severity in his reproofs of a set of people that most justly deserved it; so need not any be offended at his denouncing so many woes against them, when he finds God giving the prophets of old, sent to his priests who were negligent in their

From Matth.
xx. 19. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end.
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

(a) Levit. xix. 17.

(b) Stanhope, on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iii.

(c) Tit. i. 12, 13.

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&c. or 5442.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Ær. 33,
&c. or 31.

duty and corrupted in their morals, (just as they were now) instructions to address them in the self-same manner: (a) "Thus saith the Lord God, woe be unto the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves; should not the shepherds feed the flock? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool; ye kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the flocks, &c." And again, (b) "Woe be unto those pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture; thus saith the Lord, ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them." And if inferior prophets were commissioned to make such denunciations, much more might this great messenger of the covenant (who was both invested with supreme power from the Father, and perfectly knew what was in every man's heart, and therefore could not miscall things) be allowed (c) "to reprove and rebuke all with authority," and without violation of that great law of charity which is so peculiarly fitted to the evangelical institution, that upon sundry accounts it may not improperly be called a new commandment.

(d) This commandment indeed of loving one another is by our Lord and Saviour so much enlarged, as to the object of it extending to all mankind, and even to our greatest enemies; is so greatly advanced and heightened, as to the degree of it, even to the laying down of our lives for one another; and is so effectually taught, so mightily encouraged, and so much urged and insisted upon, that though it was a precept delivered by Moses, yet, considering in what manner the scribes and Pharisees had perverted the sense, and confined and discouraged the practice of it, it may well enough be said to have received in our Saviour a republication. And though it was not altogether unknown to other nations before, yet it was never so taught, so encouraged; never was such an illustrious example given of it, never so much stress and weight laid upon it by any philosophy or religion that was ever before in the world.

There are three passages in the prophet Daniel, which mention (e) "the abomination that maketh desolate;" and to any of these our Saviour may be supposed to allude, for they are all predictions of the dissolution of the Jewish state, "when the sacrifice and oblations should be made to cease." It is the sense indeed that our Saviour seems more to attend to, than the words of the prophecy; and because it was the custom of the Roman armies to have an eagle for their ensign, in which they placed a kind of divinity, and to carry their emperors images along with them, to which they paid a religious adoration, and therein committed such idolatry as was highly detestable to every Jew; (f) it is hence supposed, that "the abomination standing in the holy place" means the Roman army, with these hated objects of their idolatry, besieging Jerusalem; and that it is therefore called a desolation, because it was appointed by Almighty God to lay the country, city, and temple of Jerusalem desolate and waste; for so St Luke seems to have explained it by a parallel place, (g) "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."

Jerusalem indeed may perhaps, in some places of Scripture (h), be called the holy place, (i) but this is a title so peculiar to the temple, that we cannot but think that our Saviour, in the application of the prophecy, intended it here; especially (k) since his disciples, by shewing the stateliness of its buildings, gave the whole rise to his discourse. But now, if we suppose the temple to be this holy place, we cannot see how the abomination here spoken of could be the Roman army and their ensigns, because neither of these were ever in the temple until the taking and sackage of the city, and could therefore, in this respect, be no presages at all. If we suppose the city of Jerusalem to be this holy place, it is certain, that this abomination was lodged in it long before the ap-

(a) Ezek. xxxiv. 2, &c.

(b) Jer. xxiij. 1, 2.

(c) Tit. ii. 15.

(d) Tillotson's Sermons, fol. vol. i.

(e) Dan. ix. 27.—xi. 31.—xii. 11.

(f) Whitby's and Hammond's Annotations.

(g) Luke xxi. 20.

(h) Matth. iv. 5.

1 Maccab. x. 31.

(i) Calmet's Commentary.

(k) Matth. xxiv. 1, 2.

proach of Titus with his army, because the Romans had all along a strong garrison over-
against the temple, in fort Antonia, where their colours and standard were set up : Nor
can we readily conceive, why the military ensigns under Titus should be thought an
abomination to the Jews, more than those under Pompey, Socius, and Cestius, who had
all before him besieged Jerusalem.

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

These are some of the difficulties that attend the common interpretation ; and there-
fore we should rather think, that “ the abomination of desolation” here spoken of, should
refer to that gross profanation of the temple which happened a little before the begin-
ning of the siege of Jerusalem. While the Roman arms were in Judea, there were two
contending parties in Jerusalem. (a) Some were for accommodating matters with an
enemy so vastly superior to them in power, and from whom nothing less than utter ruin
was to be expected at last ; others again were for making no terms at all, but in hopes
of some strange deliverance for standing it out to the last ; and among these was a
crew of ruffians and robbers, who, from their pretended concern for the honour of God,
which they could not bear to see prostituted to Gentile power, were called *Zealots*. This
gang of men seized upon the temple, and fortified it, and having got into their posses-
sion the engines which had been left in the country by Cestius Gallus, when he besie-
ged the city about three years before ; with these they shot from the battlements of the
temple upon the town, whilst those in the town shot likewise at them, by which means
great numbers were killed on both sides, and the temple became thereby polluted with
the blood of the slain that were within it, and by which means the daily service was
intermitted, and the sanctuary, according to the Jewish notion of the word, became
desolate. Here then was a sign peculiar, and what never had happened at any siege
before, which our Saviour gave his disciples, in order to provide for their escape. Wars,
famines, murders, massacres, divisions among desperate men, and investing cities by
hostile troops, are no uncommon things in cases of this nature, and what the Jews upon
this occasion knew too much of by woful experience ; but to have the sanctuary filled
with armed men, who were after killed in the holy place, and who, by being brought
into the courts of the temple, actually defiled it with the carcasses and blood of the slain
(which were both of them to the highest degree abominable by the Mosaic law), was
the distinguishing mark of this calamity ; and when this once began to appear, the
disciples were cautioned to decline the approaching storm, by making the best of their
way out of Jerusalem, which they could not have done so well, had they staid till the
siege was formed, and the Roman army had invested the town.

(b) That it was a custom among the Jews, before our Saviour’s time, and, as they
themselves affirm, before the beginning of the law, to baptize as well as circumcise any
proselyte that came over to them from another nation ; and in case such a person had
any infant-children then born to him, that they, at their father’s desire, were in like
manner circumcised, baptized, and admitted as proselytes, is manifest from the incon-
testible evidence of their writers. The incapacity of the child to declare, or promise
for himself, was not looked on as a bar against his reception into the covenant, but the
desire of the father to dedicate him to the true God was accounted available, and suf-
ficient to justify his admission ; and the reason they give for this is,—That the things
they were admitted to were undoubtedly for their good ; for “ one may privilege a per-
son, say they, though he be incapable of knowing it ; but one ought not to disprivilege
any one without his knowledge and consent.”

Now this gives great light to our better understanding the meaning of our Saviour,
when he bids his disciples “ go, and teach all nations, baptizing them.” Baptism, he
took, as the easier rite of the two, and having converted it into an evangelical precept,
made it the federal form of admission into his religion, as circumcision had been in the

(a) *Joseph. de Bellō Jud. lib. iv.*

(b) *Wall’s History of Infant Baptism.*

A. M. 4037,
&c. or 5442.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. *Ær.* 33,
&c. or 31.

Mosaic dispensation; and as he gave his apostles no directions in their commission concerning little children, it may justly be presumed, that, with regard to them, he left them to proceed just in the same manner as the church wherein they lived had been accustomed to do, and that was, to make them proselytes to his religion by baptism.

(a) That in the Jewish church infants were part of those who engaged in covenant with God, is evident from these words of Moses to all the people; (b) "Ye stand this day before the Lord your God; you, and your little ones, that thou shouldst enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, that thou mayest be a people to him, and he unto thee thy God:" And that, in the Christian church, children, in like manner, are under the covenant of grace, is more than intimated in St Peter's exhortation to such persons as he had converted, that they would receive baptism, in order to make their children likewise capable of it, because (c) "the promise was to them and their children," i. e. the promise of remission of sins, and of receiving the Holy Ghost (mentioned immediately before), which appertained to the covenant, belonged to them and their children. Now, if the promise and covenant belonged to the children as well as parents, there is no question to be made, but that baptism, which is the seal of the covenant, and the visible confirmation of the promise, belongs to them likewise; and if infants have a covenanted right to baptism, we may safely infer, that Christ never intended to debar them of it; and that, consequently, though they are not expressly named, yet are they most certainly implied in the commission of baptizing all nations. For, since the universal includes all particulars, and children make up a considerable part of all nations, the words of the commission may reasonably be supposed to comprise them; nor can we forbear thinking, but that, when we read of whole families that were baptized, there must, of course, have been several children in them; because the word *oikos*, which in this case is rendered household, according to the observation of the learned, (d) is of a large signification, and takes in every individual person of the family, women as well as men, and children as well as grown persons.

(e) The adult, indeed, before they were admitted as proselytes to the Jewish religion, were to be instructed in the fundamentals of the law, in the weight and burden of it, and in the nature of its rewards and penalties, and so profess their submission to it; but then, it must be observed, that these pre-requisites in the parent who was capable of such instruction, did not exclude the children then born from the rite of baptism; so far from this, that, by the sentence of the Sanhedrim, the church was obliged to baptize them, as having a right to the ordinance by their parents' faith. And in like manner, they who were arrived at a competent age and understanding, were to be instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, were to (f) "confess with their mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, and to believe in their heart that God had raised him from the dead," before they were admitted to baptism. This was a condition required of them, because they were able to do it: But why this condition should exclude their children, any more than it did the children of Jewish proselytes, who were usually baptized together with their parents, we cannot see.

Our children indeed cannot understand the nature and end of the ordinance of baptism, but neither were the Jewish children, at eight days old, able to know what the purpose of circumcision was. They have no actual faith of their own, but the faith of those who present them in the congregation is imputed, and themselves are sanctified by being born of believing parents. They have no manner of room for repentance; but then they have innocence, which is a much better qualification; and though they cannot stipulate for themselves, yet have they proxies and sureties, of (g) early institution

(a) *Hopkins's Doctrine of the two Sacraments.*

(d) *Edwards's Body of Divinity*, vol. i.

Matth. xxviii.

(f) *Rom.* x. 9.

and part i. c. 4. part ii. c. 9.

(b) *Deut.* xxix. 10, &c

(c) *Acts* ii. 39.

(e) *Whitby's Dissertation*, added to his Notes on

(g) *Vid. Wall's Infant Baptism*, Introduction, sect. 34.

both in the Jewish and Christian church, to contract in their names, whose act is looked upon, and accepted by God, as theirs. In the mean time, that infants and young children, though insensible of what is done for them, may have favours conferred on them, and are capable of receiving spiritual advantages to their souls, is plain from that passage in the evangelical history, where, when (a) "young children were brought to Christ, he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them," namely, by praying for a blessing, by pronouncing a blessing, and by actually conferring a blessing on them; and if they are capable of being blessed, why should they be thought incapable of being baptized, since baptism, in the main, is but a solemn benediction, as it instates us in the privileges and benefits of the Gospel, such as adoption and grace, the pardon of our sins, and the acceptance of our persons?

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark. xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

In short (b), the covenant of grace is a deed of gift made to us by Christ, wherein he promises to bestow upon us eternal life and happiness: And as it would be absurd to say, that a child's name ought not to be put into any deed or legacy, until he came of age to understand it; so it is equally absurd, and far more injurious, to exclude our children from this heavenly legacy which Christ, out of the riches of his goodness, has bequeathed unto them: Especially, considering (c) that the primitive church did all along, and (d) every national church at this day in the world does, admit their children into the Christian covenant by this ordinance; that (e) many of the most ancient writers plead the necessity of it, for the expiation of original guilt, and (f) speak of it as a great sin in parents, and others, that have opportunity, to suffer any child of theirs, or any other person under their care, to die unbaptized.

In relation to the other sacrament, there can be no great difficulty in our Saviour's words, if we will but admit, that the Scripture very frequently makes use of figurative expressions, and, in matters of a sacramental nature more especially, is apt to put the sign for the thing signified. (g) "The three baskets are three days, (h) the seven good kine are seven years, (i) the ram with the two horns are the kings of Media and Persia, (k) Sarah and Agar are the two covenants, and (l) the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches," are instances of this kind: And when Moses, speaking of the paschal lamb, tells the Israelites (m) "This is the Lord's passover," even before the Lord had passed over them, and smitten the Egyptians; and of the unleavened bread used at the paschal feast, "This is the bread of affliction which your fathers did eat in the land of Egypt," his meaning can be no other, than that these things were a representation and memorial of what had befallen their forefathers in Egypt: And therefore it is no wonder that our Blessed Saviour, in the institution of this sacrament, should make choice of the like form of expression, as was in use in the Jewish church upon the like occasion; and, consequently, that when he says, "This is my body," and "this is my blood," his meaning must be, that "this bread in my hand, and the wine in this cup, do signify and represent to you my body and blood, and that, in eating and drinking of these, you are made 'partakers of my body and blood,' i. e. of the real benefits of my death and passion."

(n) And indeed, if we consider, that our Blessed Saviour celebrated this sacrament before his passion, we shall soon perceive that his words could not possibly bear any other construction: For how could he hold himself in his own hand, or give his disciples his body broken, and his blood shed, when at this time he was alive, and no violence had passed upon him? (o) They saw his body whole before them, and knew that his blood was in his veins, and therefore could not but conclude, that what they eat

(a) Luke xviii. 15. (b) Hopkins's Doctrine of the Two Sacraments. (c) Wall's History of Infant Baptism, part i. passim. (d) Ibid. part ii. c. 8. (e) Ibid. part i. passim. (f) Ibid. c. 4. 6. 15. 18. &c. (g) Gen. xl. 18. (h) Ibid. xli. 26. (i) Dan. viii. 20. (k) Gal. iv. 24. (l) Rev. i. 20. (m) Exod. xii. 11. (n) Tillotson's Sermons in folio, vol. i. (o) Whitby's Annotations on Matth. xxvi. 26.

A. M. 4037,
&c. or 5442.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Fr. 33.
&c. or 31.

and drank, according to the evidence of their senses, was bread and wine; for, had they understood our Saviour's words in their literal meaning, it is hardly imaginable, but that they who upon all other occasions were so full of their questions and objections, would, upon the first hearing of this paradox, have started some such scruple as this,—
“ We see this to be bread, and that to be wine, and we see that thy body is distinct from both; we see that thy body is not broken, nor is thy blood shed, ‘ how therefore can these things be ?’ ”.

The ancient apologists for our holy religion take notice, that this is one of the great-est accusations which the heathens brought against Christians, that they did eat human flesh; which they endeavour to refute, and constantly rejected, as the vilest calumny, and most abominable thing: but now, had they understood our Saviour's words in a literal sense, and thereupon made it an article of faith, that they did daily “ eat the flesh of the Son of Man,” with what sincerity could they, without all limitation or distinction, not only have denied, but even detested the doing so? (a) Nay, nothing is more obvious than that primitive writers continually ridicule the heathens for worship-ping such deities as might be eaten, and instance particularly in the Egyptians, “ who made the same flesh, which some of them did consecrate as a god, the food of others.” But how can it possibly be conceived, that they should thus ridicule and expose the religion of heathens, for that very thing which made so great a part in their own; or brand that, as the very extremity of madness and folly, when done by others, which their faith taught them was the highest act of religious worship, when performed by themselves? (b) These things surely give us sufficient reason (with Scotus) to admire, that “ such an interpretation should be put upon this one article, as makes our faith contemptible to all that are guided with reason; and at the same time to assert, that as it is apparently against humanity and against piety to break with our hands, to tear with our teeth, and to devour, as we do common food, the flesh and blood of Christ, and that the scorn of atheists and infidels will never cease, until the doctrine which established these positions be banished from the Christian church.

We own, indeed, that the whole stress of the Christian cause lies upon the truth of our Lord's resurrection, and that all proper methods of convincing the world were necessary upon this occasion; but then it should be considered, (c) that our Lord being now, after his resurrection, to act according to the majesty of the Divine nature, and not according to the infirmities and condescension of the human, it did not so well com-port with the dignity he had assumed, to converse publicly, or to submit himself to the censures, and fresh affronts of his enemies. [His familiar conversation with the world before his passion, was a principal branch of his humiliation (d), and his humiliation was an essential part of those sufferings by which the guilt of man was expiated. But the atonement being once made, the form of a servant was to be forever removed; Christ was to reassume his glory, and to be seen no more but as the only begotten of the Father. The scheme of redemption required, that before the passion the form of the servant should be predominant in the Redeemer's appearance; but that after his resurrection the form of God should be conspicuous. Accordingly, throughout his previous life, his manners, though grave, were unreserved; and though serious, not severe; whilst his whole deportment was indeed highly dignified, but never assuming. How great was the change after his resurrection? Even in his interviews with his disciples we find no trace of that easy familiarity of intercourse, which obtained between him and them before his death, when he condescended to lead his whole life in their society, as a man with his equals. He had then a home at Capernaum where he lived with his mother and her family, except when the stated festivals called him to Jerusalem, or

(a) *Whitby's* Annotations on Matth. xxvi. 26.
the Christian Religion, vol. ii.

(b) *Ibid.*

(c) *Jenkins's* Reasonableness of

(d) Bishop *Horsley's* Sermons on our Lord's Resurrection.

the business of his ministry induced him to visit other towns. But, after his resurrection, the place of his abode for a single night is not once mentioned; nor, from the most diligent examination of the history, can any place of abode on earth be assigned to him. His body being glorified, as the bodies of all the saints shall be at the resurrection in the last day, required neither food for its subsistence, nor a lodging for its shelter and repose. He was become the inhabitant of another region, from which he came occasionally to converse with his disciples. His appearances to them were for the most part unforeseen and sudden; nor less suddenly did he disappear. He was found in their company without apparently coming in; and he was again perceived to have left them without apparently going away. In all his interviews with them he maintained an awful dignity, whilst they kept themselves at a great distance. Whatever was natural to him before seems now to be miraculous, and whatever was miraculous appears now to be natural; for except certain actions, which were done to give his disciples proof that they saw in him their crucified Lord arisen from the grave, he seems to have done nothing like a common man.] But supposing it to have been consistent with the scheme of redemption, surely (a) the unbelieving Jews, especially the chief priests and rulers, were, of all men, most unworthy to have so extraordinary a way of conviction afforded to them.

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

They had already despised the evidence that was given them; and not only so, but maliciously imputed the plainest miracles that ever were wrought, to the power and operation of the devil. Now, if any thing can render men incapable of the favour of a farther conviction, such a malicious resistance of the evidence which our Saviour's miracles carried along with them, would probably do it; especially if we consider that the greatest of all the miracles which he wrought in his lifetime, (I mean the raising of Lazarus from the grave, after he had been dead four days) was so far from convincing them, that, though they could not deny the thing, they took occasion to resolve to put him to death: And therefore, what reason was there that Christ should appear to them for their conviction, who had conspired to compass his death, even because they knew that he had raised one from the dead?

But supposing, for the present, that our Saviour had appeared publicly to the Jewish rulers; yet, since neither the darkness at his death, nor the earthquake at his resurrection, neither the declaration of the centurion on the one, nor the confession of the soldiers on the other occasion, had wrought in them any remorse, we can hardly suppose but that, had he so appeared, they would have offered to lay violent hands upon him, as they before designed against Lazarus, and for the same reasons. (b) In which case, had our Saviour vanished out of their hands, (as doubtless he would) what would they have concluded from thence, but that they had seen a ghost, a spectre, or apparition? And what conviction would that have wrought, but that their senses had been imposed upon by some magical illusion? And what effect would this have had upon their minds towards bringing them to a belief that Christ was truly risen? None at all.

In many of the Jews, (especially their chief priests and elders) "the god of this world had so blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts," that they would not have believed one tittle of our Saviour's resurrection; or in case they did believe it, such was their malice and perverseness, that they would not have testified that they ever had seen him after his resurrection. (c) Now they that are wicked enough to deny what they believe, will, at a pinch, deny also what they know to be true; and therefore, supposing that our Lord had shown himself to all his enemies, and to all the people, and but some of them (especially of the great men in authority) had denied that ever they saw him after his resurrection, this would have exceedingly weakened the testimony of those who vouched and confessed it: For he that appeals to the knowledge of another for the

(a) Tillotson's Sermons.

(b) South's Sermons, vol. v.

(c) Clagget's Sermons, vol. i.

A. M. 4037,
&c. or 5442.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Ær. 33,
&c. or 31.

truth of a matter of fact, is so far from gaining, that he loses credit by the appeal, if the other person denies that he knows any thing of it. If therefore our Lord had appeared to his persecutors, (it being likely that his disciples would appeal to their knowledge) they, by protesting the contrary, would have made a terrible advantage against the Christians upon that appeal. Herein therefore is manifest the wisdom of Christ, that in making choice of particular witnesses, viz. such persons only as would be so far from dissembling their knowledge, that they would always be ready to seal their testimony with their blood, he hath settled the Christian faith upon a better foundation than if he had appeared in the temple, or in the midst of Jerusalem, to the whole people of the Jews.

[The truth is, (a) that it is not the number of the witnesses, but their character and qualifications, together with the consistency of the evidence which they bear, that in all cases are to be chiefly regarded. The number of the apostles was fully sufficient to prove any matter of fact, that can be proved by testimony; and, for the reasons stated in the Supplementary Dissertation on the miracles of our Saviour, &c., their bearing false witness in a case of this kind, and all agreeing in that witness, would have been as great a deviation from the known laws of nature, as any miracle that ever was wrought. Had our Lord appeared publicly in the streets of Jerusalem, in the temple, or before the Sanhedrim, such appearances could have to us added no weight to the concurring testimony of the apostles. Once he certainly did appear publicly in Galilee to five hundred persons who believed in him, besides others who doubted, and therefore could not have been disciples; but this appearance is never appealed to by the apostles and evangelists in proof of the resurrection, though it is once mentioned by St Paul for a different purpose. The reason is obvious. "To have seen our Lord ever so often after his resurrection would have qualified no one to be a witness of the fact, who had not such a previous knowledge of his person, as might enable him to perceive and attest its identity. Perhaps we may insist upon another circumstance, that every one pretending to avouch the resurrection, should have been an eye-witness of the crucifixion; for the fact to be attested was, that *this same man had been dead and was alive again*;" and of the multitudes who were present at the crucifixion, how few besides the disciples could have given this attestation! The appearance of Jesus writhing in agony on the cross must have been very different from that of the same Jesus calmly teaching in the temple, and working his miracles of mercy. Even of those few who could have sworn to the identity of his person, none were qualified to be *witnesses of his resurrection to the world, but they, whose knowledge of his person was a fact of public notoriety*. "For to establish the credit of a witness, it is not sufficient that he be really competent to judge for himself of the reality of the fact, which he takes it upon him to attest, but his competency in the matter must be *generally known and understood*. Now this was the case of the apostles," but of none else. Others might have had a sufficient knowledge of his person to identify it to themselves after his resurrection; but this was known only to themselves—certainly not to all Jerusalem.

It appears, therefore, upon a nice discussion of the question, that the evidence which we actually have of our Lord's resurrection, in the testimony of the chosen witnesses, is indeed the greatest of which the fact is capable; for it is the evidence not of men only, but of God also.] If but a few men can (as the apostles did) make it sufficiently appear, by undeniable miracles, that what they say is true, and that God himself confirms the truth of it; they can appeal to every man's own senses, before whom they work miracles, and make every one that sees them a witness to the truth of their doctrines. In this case, God himself bears witness to it; and what the high priest said upon a very different occasion, every stander-by finds himself constrained to declare in

this, "What need have we of any farther witnesses? For we ourselves have heard of their own mouths, (in the miraculous gift of tongues) and seen with our own eyes," (in the many wonderful works which they have publicly wrought) a full and authentic testimony of Christ's resurrection.

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19.
to the end.

And this possibly may suggest the reason why God permitted the apostle St Thomas to be so scrupulous and doubtful in this great article of our faith. He had been told that our Saviour was risen from the dead, and the truth of it had been attested to him by evidences beyond exception: (a) Several companies who had seen him and conversed with him several times, to whom he had exposed the sight and feeling of his wounds; to whom he had expounded the Scriptures concerning himself; with whom he had broken the sacramental bread, and conferred on them the benediction of the Holy Ghost: All these, with all these convincing tokens, had told Thomas that Christ was risen; but Thomas's reply was, (b) "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." It might indeed be urged before, that our Lord had not given all the proofs of his resurrection that the nature of the thing was capable of; but (c) now, when nothing is left unasked, that the most sceptical doubts could pretend to desire; when the very apostles themselves had one of their number that held out a while, and they preached not this doctrine until his scruples were removed; when even this doubter himself was no less vigorous and positive afterwards in asserting the truth of a point, which nothing but demonstration could make him believe; this takes off all imputation of credulity and easiness. It shows that the apostles proceeded with great caution, before they embarked in the cause of Christianity, which could not but reap great advantages from the backwardness of one of their number to believe; and therefore our church justly acknowledges, that (d) "God, in his wisdom, suffered Thomas to doubt, for the greater confirmation of our faith," according to that saying of one of the ancients, "Plus nobis Thomæ infidelitas ad fidem, quam fides discipulorum profuit; quia dum ille ad fidem palpando reducitur, nostra mens, omni dubitatione postposita, in fide solidatur." This disciple, in short, doubted, and was satisfied for us all. His former unbelief adds strength to the cause he pleads, and makes him a witness so much above exception, that the scruples, which in him were weaknesses, in those that pretend to follow him, and know his story, will be wilfulness, and resolved infidelity.

His story indeed, and the means which (as we therein read) our Saviour made use of to convince him, will instruct us in this,—That, whatever changes our Saviour's glorified body might undergo after his resurrection, it was not altered, as to the properties of a body, whereof our outward senses are competent judges. To these senses it is that our Lord appealed; by these he composed the disciples, suspecting him to be a phantom; by these he satisfied the doubtful and incredulous; and by these the apostles make it their business to persuade the world, when they so frequently testify, that they (e) "had seen and heard him, had eaten and drank with him." But now, if our Saviour's body was not subject to the same laws with other corporeal substances; if it could then pass through the doors in the manner of a spirit, and may at this time be, where our senses can discern nothing of it, though no other body can be so; then what satisfaction could Thomas receive in feeling his hands and side? or wherein would the strength of St John's argument lie, when he declares to his proselytes, (f) "that he had seen and heard, and his hands had handled, of the word of life?"

The indulgence indeed which our Saviour gave his apostles, to try all their senses upon him, gave them full satisfaction, both as to the materiality and identity of his body. But then, as all philosophy informs us, that no body can penetrate through ano-

(a) *Young's Sermons*, vol. ii.
Gospels, vol. iv.

(b) John xx. 25.
(d) *Collect on St Thomas's Day*.

(c) *Stanhope on the Epistles and*
(e) Acts x. 41. (f) 1 John i. 1.

A. M. 4037, ther *, we may reasonably infer, that when our Lord came to his apostles, on purpose, &c. or 5442. as it were, to convince them of the reality of his resurrection-body, he did not glide into Ann. Dom. the room like a spirit or phantasm, but, by his sovereign power, opened the door him-
 Vulg. Ær. 33, self (even as the angel did the prison-gates to release Peter) secretly, and without the
 &c. or 31. perception of any in the company, who might all then be at the upper end of the room perhaps, and employed in some such business as took up their whole attention. For (a) unless we can suppose, that our Saviour designed to invalidate the strength of what he said and did, to convince his apostles of the truth of his resurrection, we cannot believe, that at the same time he would do a thing (known and observed by them) which would in effect evacuate the force of all his proofs *2.

It is difficult, however, to imagine the reason, why our Saviour should so far condescend to his apostles, as to shew his hands and his feet, desiring them to handle them, when, not long before, he forbade Mary Magdalene to touch him, because he was not yet ascended; unless we may suppose, that, after his resurrection, he might ascend several times, and that his first ascension was immediately insuant upon it.

Now, to make this more obvious, we must remember, that, a little before his passion, our Saviour foretold to his apostles his sudden ascent to his Father, and as sudden descent to them again: (b) "Yet a little while, says he, and ye shall see me, and again, a little while, and ye shall not see me, because I go to my Father;" and that afterwards, upon their surprise, and dispute about the meaning of the expression, (c) "Jesus said unto them, do you enquire among yourselves of what I said, A little while, and ye shall see me, and again, a little while, and ye shall not see me: Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice, and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy, &c." (d) Now, if we compare this prediction with the event, how sad and disconsolate the apostles were upon our Saviour's death, and how refreshed and joyful they were soon after his resurrection, and consider withal, that this sorrow was to last till Christ had been with his Father, and then their joy to commence; we shall be inclined to believe, that what our Lord would be to understood to say, is, that he was to go to his Father immediately after his resurrection, and then very soon to return to his apostles again, even the very same day in the evening.

And indeed, considering that Christ was our high priest, it was necessary for him to ascend into heaven as soon as his sufferings were finished. For as the high priest, under the law, was not only to slay the sacrifice, but to carry the blood, that moment, within the sanctuary, and there present it before God, to complete the atonement, and make intercession for the people; so Christ, having shed his blood, and offered his body

* [This is a great mistake. Heat, or *caloric* which is believed to be a body, penetrates all things, and *light*, which is another body, penetrates many substances deemed solid.]

(a) *Whitby's* Annotations on John xx. 19.

*2 [It was natural enough for our author to reason in this way from the state of physical science in his time; but our Lord's making his appearance in the room, without taking the trouble to open the door, can now create no difficulty to any man, who reflects on the well known fact, that perhaps no two atoms of the densest body are in absolute contact. But without entering on that subject, which it would not be easy to explain to some, it is sufficient to observe, that whosoever admits that the same material substance is in one state *ice*, in another *water*, and in a third *steam*, and admits likewise that the Divine nature of Christ had at least as much power over the

substance of his own body, to which it was hypostatically united, as different portions of *caloric* or the matter of heat, have over the substance of water to which they are chemically united, will surely find no difficulty in conceiving, that our Saviour might come into the room without opening the door, and yet not weaken in the smallest degree the proofs which he had given to the apostles of his own resurrection. To Bishop Horsely this appeared so evident, that, in the sermons already referred to, he contends, and I think indeed he has proved, that our Lord had left his sepulchre before the stone was rolled from its mouth; and that the angels were sent from heaven not to relieve him, but to frighten the Roman guards from their post, and to make way for the pious women who had come to embalm the body of their deceased Lord.]

(b) John xvi. 16.

(c) *Ibid.* ver. 19.

(d) *Mr Whiston's* Essays.

on the altar of the cross, was immediately to ascend into the heavenly sanctuary, and there obtain for us the remission of our sins, and all the other benefits of his passion.

But this is not all. In several parts of Scripture our Saviour is invested with a regal as well as sacerdotal character; but now, if, according to the testimony of the same Scripture, he could not exercise any supreme authority until he was exalted to his heavenly kingdom; if he could not (a) give gifts unto men until he was ascended up on high; nor (b) send his Holy Spirit upon his disciples until he was glorified, and had by his intercession (c) obtained that great promise of the Father; if he could not, I say, administer the affairs of his mediatorial kingdom before he had conquered death by his resurrection, and had presented himself as a slain sacrifice and propitiation for the sins of the world, before the presence of the Divine Majesty; this makes it evident, that, on the very day of his resurrection, he must have ascended to heaven, because, in the evening of that day, we find him (d) giving a commission and instructions to his apostles; promising them the mission of the Holy Ghost; (e) blessing them in a solemn manner; (f) sending them as his Father had sent him; (g) giving them the power of remitting and retaining sins; and afterwards in Galilee, (h) assuring them, that all power was given him in heaven, as well as earth; and therefore commanding them to go and teach, and baptize all nations, and promising his powerful presence with them, even until the end of the world.

Now if these exercises, both of the sacerdotal office and regal power, could not properly belong to our Saviour until his exaltation, then we have reason to suppose, that, in the morning of his resurrection, he privately ascended into heaven, to receive the reward of his humiliation in our flesh; and that the reason for his forbidding Mary to touch him was, that, by her officious embraces and importunity, she might not hinder him from ascending that moment, and (what was the crown of all his labour) carrying our glorified nature, as soon as possibly he could, into that blessed place where God's majestic presence appears, and where thrones, dominions, principalities, powers, angels, and archangels, have their abode.

DISSERTATION IV.

OF OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR'S DOCTRINE, AND THE EXCELLENCY OF HIS RELIGION.

THE completion of the prophecies relating to the promised Messiah, in the person and actions of our Saviour Christ, and the miracles which he wrought, in testimony of his Divine mission, and in conformity to what the Messiah was to do, were the subjects of the two preceding Dissertations, as the great external evidences of the truth of our holy religion; and the internal evidence is, the goodness and perfection of those precepts relating to practice, which he hath enjoined, and of those doctrines relating to faith, which he hath taught us in the course of his gospel, and which, when duly considered, will manifest the excellency of the Christian religion above all others.

Now the practical part of our holy religion, or those precepts which were intended

(a) Eph. iv. 8. (b) John vii. 39. (c) Acts ii. 33. (d) Mark xvi. 15, &c.
(e) Luke xxiv. 50. (f) John xx. 21. (g) Ibid. ver. 23. (h) Matth. xxviii. 18, &c.

A. M. 4037.
 &c. or 5142.
 Ann. Dom.
 Vulg. Br. 33.
 &c. or 31.

to direct us in our duty towards God and man, are such as either tend to the perfection of human nature, or to the peace and happiness of human society. Of those which tend to the perfection of human nature, some enjoin piety towards God, and others require the good government of ourselves with respect to the pleasures of this life; and our business is to shew, that all and every one of these are both conformable to the dictates of right reason in their practice, and declarative of the wisdom of God in their appointment.

(a) 1. That we should inwardly reverence and love God, and express that reverence by external worship and adoration, and by our readiness to receive and obey all the revelations of his will; that we should testify our dependance upon him, and our confidence in his goodness, by constant prayers and supplications to him for mercy and help both for ourselves and others; that we should acknowledge our obligations to him for the many favours and benefits which every day, every moment, we receive from him, by continual praises and thanksgivings; and that, on the contrary, we should not entertain any unworthy thoughts of God, nor give that honour and reverence which is due to him to any other; that we should not worship him in any manner that is either unsuitable to the perfections of his nature, or repugnant to his revealed will; that we should carefully avoid the profanation of his name, by customary swearing or cursing; and take great heed that we be not guilty of the neglect or contempt of his worship, or of any other thing that belongs to him: In short, (b) that we should possess our minds with such a due sense of the majesty, and holiness, and justice, and goodness of God, as may make us upon all occasions thoroughly fearful to offend him; of his majesty, lest we affront it by being irreverent; of his holiness, lest we offend it by being carnal; of his justice, lest we provoke it by being presumptuous; and of his goodness, lest we forfeit it by being unthankful. These are the general heads of those duties which every man's reason tells him he owes to God, and yet these are the very things which the Christian religion expressly requires of us; so that, in this part of Christianity, there is nothing but what exactly agrees with the reason of mankind.

In respect to the good government of ourselves, amidst the pleasures and enjoyments of this life, St John, when he tells us, that (c) "all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life," distributes the irregular appetites of men into three kinds, voluptuousness, covetousness, and ambition, answerable to the three sorts of tempting objects that are in the world, pleasures, riches, and honours; but when our holy religion requires of us, that (d) "we should not walk after the flesh but after the spirit;" that we should, in short, (e) "walk decently as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, (f) but being holy in all manner of conversation, (g) abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;" when it gives us this strict caution (h) "to take heed and beware of covetousness, because a man's life, or the happiness of his life, consisteth not in the things which he possesseth;" and calls upon us so frequently (i) "to be meek and lowly of spirit, and not (k) to mind high things; to (l) let nothing be done through vain glory, but in lowliness of mind to let each esteem other better than themselves;" it is plain, that it lays a prohibition upon all such irregular appetites and passions as are the bane of human ease and happiness, and enjoins such virtues and good dispositions as are not only highly reasonable, suitable to our nature, and every way for our temporal convenience and advantage, but such as dispose us likewise to the practice of piety and religion, by purifying our souls from the dross and filth of sensual delights.

2. In relation to the other sort of precepts, which (as we said) tend to the peace and

(a) Tillotson's Sermons in Folio, vol. i.

(d) Rom. viii. 1.

(h) Luke xii. 15.

(e) Ibid. chap. xiii. 18.

(i) Matth. xi. 29.

(b) Young's Sermons, vol. i.

(f) 1 Pet. i. 15.

(k) Rom. xii. 16.

(c) 1 John ii. 16.

(g) Ibid. chap. ii. 11.

(l) Phil. ii. 3.

happiness of human society, they are such as enjoin all those virtues that are apt to sweeten the spirits, and allay the passions and animosities which sometimes happen among men. For when our most holy religion requires us, "to love our neighbour (i. e. every man in the world, even our greatest enemies) as ourselves," and in pursuance of this general precept, "if it be possible, as much as in us lieth, to live peaceably with all men; to be kind to one another," ready to gratify and oblige those that we converse with, to be tender hearted and compassionate to those that are in want and misery, and ready, upon all occasions, to supply and relieve them; to sympathise with one another in our joys and sorrows, "to mourn with those that mourn, and to rejoice with them that rejoice; to bear one another's burdens; and to forbear one another in love;" to be easily reconciled to them that have offended us; and to be ready to forgive from our hearts the greatest and most reiterated injuries that can be done us; it discovers itself not only to be the most innocent and harmless, but the most generous and best natured institution that ever was in the world.

From Matth.
xx. 10 to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

In like manner, when our holy religion endeavours to secure the private interests of men, as well as the public peace, by confirming and enforcing all the dictates of nature concerning justice and equity; by recommending the great rule of doing to others what we would have them to do to us, as the sum and substance of the law and the prophets; by commanding obedience to human laws, which decide mens rights, and submission to every established government, under pain of damnation; and by forbidding whatever is contrary to these, viz. violence and oppression, fraud and over-reaching, perfidiousness and treachery, breach of trusts, oaths, or promises, undutifulness to superiors, sedition and rebellion against magistracy and authority; and if there be any thing else that is apt to disturb the peace of the world, and to alienate the affections of men from one another, such as sourness of disposition, and rudeness of behaviour, censoriousness, and sinister interpretation of things; in short, all cross and distasteful humours, and whatever else may render conversation uneasy and unsociable: When the laws of Christianity, I say, forbid these vices and evil dispositions, and upon every occasion command the contrary virtues, (a) "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, requiring us to think of these things;" we cannot but allow, that nothing can be devised more proper and effectual to advance the nature of man to its highest perfection, to procure the tranquillity of mens minds, to establish the peace and happiness of the world, and (if they were duly practised) to make it, as it were, an heaven upon earth, than the precepts which we find recorded in the Gospel: and (what is no small commendation of them) there is nothing in all these precepts but what, if we were to consult our own interest and happiness, we should think ourselves obliged to do, even though it were never enjoined us; nothing, in short, but what is easy to be understood, and as easy to be practised by every honest and well-meaning mind.

Some indeed have represented even the moral part of the Christian religion as an "heavy burden, and grievous to be borne," difficult to be kept, and yet dangerous to be broken; that it requires us to govern and keep under our passions, to contradict our strongest inclinations, and many times to deny ourselves even lawful enjoyments; that it enjoins us to forgive and "love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate and persecute us; [nay, that it commands us "not to resist evil; but to him who shall smite us on the right cheek, to turn the other also; if any man will sue us at the law, and take away our coats, to let him have our cloaks also; and with him who shall compel us to go with him one mile, to go two; (b)] and (what is more) that it commands us to part with all the advantages of this world, and even to lay down

(a) Philip iv. 8,

(b) St Matth. v. 39—42.

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&c. or 5412.
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Vulg. Fr. 33,
&c. or 31.

life itself in the cause of God, and the discharge of a good conscience. Hard sayings these, in some mens opinion, and such as our nature, in its state of degeneracy, is not able to perform : but this is for want of duly considering the obligation and tendency of such duties.

Some of the wisest heathens, even by the strength of reason, were able to discover the general corruption of human nature; but then they were ignorant both of the rise and progress of it; whereas by the Christian revelation we are sufficiently instructed in both. Here we find the baleful venom of our first ancestors transgression entailed on their posterity (a); here the perpetual strugglings of flesh and spirit, and that violence of passions and desires, that so often carries us into excesses, which our sober and better sense cannot but disapprove; and here that general bent to evil, and backwardness to good, which every one (but such as are obdurate and insensible) is forced both to feel and lament; and therefore, since the Gospel does not only shew us our disease, but the malignity and true original of it, there is good reason why it should be allowed to press upon us the great duties of mortification and self-denial, as the best means within the compass of human power to cure us of it.

(b) The heathen sages, in the passage of their Hercules fighting with Antæus, seem to insinuate, that the only way to gain the mastery over our passions, is never to cease contending with them. Whilst Hercules grasped his adversary, and held him up in his arms, he could manage and master him with ease, but no sooner did he let Antæus touch the earth, but he got strength again, and was able to renew the combat. Antæus's touching the earth is morally no other than an earthly affection permitted to unite with its element, i. e. suffered to have its fill; at which time it gets strength, and grows masterly, and becomes less manageable than it was before: Whereas, to grapple with our desires, to hold them off from the reach of their quarry, and to restrain them, even from the lawful measures of enjoyment, is the only way, both to bring them into subjection and to confirm our government over them.

The truth is, every time that we indulge our appetites beyond what is convenient, we give away so much power out of our own hands; we strengthen the enemy for the next attack, and disable ourselves still more for resisting it: And therefore, as the Christian state is deservedly called a warfare, i. e. the necessary and continual engagement of our rational desires against our sensual, in order to bring them under and keep them in obedience; and as in this warfare there must be no league, no truce, no laying down of arms, because the enemy is perfidious, and will never keep the peace; so are we never out of danger but while we are actually fighting. (c) The more we gratify our appetites the more craving they will be, and the more impatient of denial; for every lust is a kind of hydropic distemper, and in this case too, the more we drink the more we shall thirst. If we give way to our passions, we do but gratify ourselves for the present, in order to our future disquiet; but if we resist and conquer them, we lay the foundation of perpetual peace and tranquillity in our minds: So that, in the whole, by retrenching our desires, especially when they prove exorbitant, we do not rob ourselves of any true pleasure, but only prevent the pain and trouble of farther dissatisfaction.

(d) The ancient moralists, though they sometimes decry an insensibility of just provocations, as a mark of an abject and little soul; yet upon no occasion are they so profuse in their praises, as where they speak of persons touched with a sense of injuries and indignities, and yet able, with a generous contempt, to overlook and shew themselves above them; for the passing by and forgetting such things, the being very hardly incensed, and very

(a) [See the Appendix to the Dissertation on Original Sin, vol. i.]
mon's vol. i.
Boyle's Lectures.

(c) Tillotson's Sermons, in folio, vol. i.

(b) Young's Sermon's
(d) Stanhope's Sermons at

readily appeased again, is constantly set forth as one of the brightest virtues that give lustre to a brave and truly noble mind. And if such were the notions of heathens, who professed to follow no other guide but the light of reason, surely the duty of loving and forgiving those that have injured and offended us, cannot be a task so very difficult to Christians, who, in matters capable of any tolerable construction, are required to put on that charity, (a) "which believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things;" and, in the worst that can be, such a generous greatness of mind, as "puts away from us all bitterness, and wrath, and clamour, and evil-speaking, with all malice; such as should make us kind and tender-hearted,—(b) restoring those that are overtaken in a fault in the spirit of meekness; and such as should prevail with us,—(c) to forbear one another, and to forgive one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us."

Fr. m Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

[The truth is, that most of the objections urged against the moral precepts of the Gospel proceed from a total misapprehension of the import of those precepts. When our Lord says—(d) "Resist not evil," he alludes, as he himself informs us, to the *lex talionis*, or law of retaliation, which authorised an injured Jew to demand, if he chose, blow for blow, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." This law the Christian Legislator repealed; and for the best of all reasons, because cases may occur, in which it could not be enforced without extreme cruelty. Many things, we know, were permitted to the Jews for the hardness of their hearts, and among them we may conclude was the practice of retaliation, which, in the corrupt age in which our Saviour appeared on earth, had probably extended far beyond the *spirit*, if not the *letter*, of the law. It would certainly be cruel, if not unjust, to render a man, with one eye, stone-blind, because in a sudden fit of passion he had accidentally struck out one of the eyes of his neighbour; or to deprive an artist of his right-hand, by which he supports himself and his family, because in anger he had struck off the right-hand of a man, who subsists by some employment, perhaps of his voice. These retaliations might be demanded by the Jews; but the mild and merciful Redeemer of the world, enjoins his followers to submit to repeated injuries of this kind, rather than avail themselves of this law, to indulge a spirit of revenge, from which they could not reap the smallest benefit. To deprive their offending brother of an eye or a limb in cool blood, could not restore to them the eye or limb, of which he had deprived any one of them in a fit of passion; and, as is evident from the context, this is all which our Lord meant, when he said, "Resist not evil;"—"do not retaliate (e)."]

He commands them to yield to slight instances of injustice, rather than have recourse to litigation for every trifle; and he strictly forbids his immediate disciples to insist on a privilege claimed by the disciples of the scribes and Pharisees, of being exempted from those occasional journeys in the service of the state, which all other Jews, when called upon, were bound to perform in the company of the public messengers *. As disciples of a Rabbi, who taught publicly in the temple, and spake as never man spake, they had an equal right with the disciples of the other doctors of the law to be exempted from this public duty; but their Master commanded them, instead of urging a false claim, rather to go twice as far as they were bound to do by the customs of the country, and thus avoid all appearance of resistance to the government.]

And indeed, he who considers that the very foundation of our religion is laid in the

- (a) 1 Cor. xiii. 7.
- (b) Gal. vi. 1.
- (c) Eph. iv. 31. 32.
- (d) See Gleig's Sermons.—serm. 12.
- (e) See Schleusner on the word ἀντιτάξις.

those who studied the law, that one of them thus expresses himself; "Quare punitus est Abrahamus pater noster, et afflicti sunt filii ejus in Egypto? Quia angariavit discipulos sapientum; sicut dicitur (Gen. xiv. 14.) Armavit Catechumenos suos!" Vid. Lightfoot Horæ Hebraicæ in Evangel. Matt. cap. v.]

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&c. or 31.

belief and profession of a pardon extended to the highest of all provocations, of love inconceivable to the worst of all enemies, and both these expressed and effected by a person, the most highly injured, and in a method the most beneficial, the most amazingly kind; insomuch, that no instance of generosity or goodness besides, presents us with any thing like it, with any thing near it, with any thing fit to be named with it: He who considers this, I say, cannot but acknowledge that the precept of loving and forgiving our enemies is peculiarly suitable to the condition of Christians, who owe all their hopes and happiness to it; and that it would have been absurd not to have obliged those men to a virtue, which they confess themselves so infinitely beholden to, and (a) which no man can think a grievous command, who considers the pleasure and sweetness of love, the glorious victory of overcoming evil with good, and then compares these with the restless torments and perpetual tumults of a malicious and revengeful spirit.

(b) 3. The Stoics of old represented their wise man as no more concerned at the loss of his estate, his liberty, or life, than if they were the rattles or gewgaws of a child, which might afford him some little ease, and present diversion indeed, but were by no means essential, or, in any degree, necessary to his real happiness. This however is a flight too romantic to be credited. To lay down this life, and all the comforts of it, while men were so much in the dark about another, and to expose the body to sufferings, when doubtful and in distrust about the soul, is too great an infraction upon self-preservation, because it is to part with one's all, at least our all in certainty and opinion: But to do this, when men know the reality of a future state, and the value of their immortal souls; (c) "to fear him who, when he hath killed, can cast both body and soul into hell," rather than them, "who can only kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do;" to receive, embrace, rejoice in (d) "the light affliction, which is but for a moment," when thoroughly persuaded, that "it worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;" this is not to destroy, but to save and profit ourselves, and what, in the affairs of this world, we esteem it our wisdom to do every day.

If by any sad accident our house happens to be set on fire, no man is to be blamed for doing his best to save his goods; but when that is found impracticable, every wise man will choose to leave all and escape naked, rather than, out of a foolish fondness for any furniture of value or curiosity, there stay and perish with it. Now this is no improper emblem of the case before us. When the fire of persecution breaks out among us, we have our Lord's permission, by all prudent and honourable methods, to decline it; but when it comes at last to catch upon these earthly tabernacles, i. e. when our circumstances admit of no other choice but either sinning or suffering, the loss of our lives or the loss of our virtue, we owe it then, not only to God, but to ourselves, rather to quit this house of flesh, than bring the glorious inhabitant in it into danger of being buried in its ruins.

Upon the whole, therefore, this taking up our cross, or suffering, upon the account of religion, is not choosing evil, as such, but choosing an infinitely less evil, which, in this respect, is a great good. It is not exposing ourselves when we might be safe, but where we cannot be safe in our whole persons, redeeming one part with another, the better with the worse; it is not sustaining a loss, but making an exchange, an exchange of fugitive and perishing goods for lasting and substantial, and parting with something of less value, in order to receive another thing unspeakably better and more desirable.

Thus it appears, that the three great precepts which are commonly objected against as heavy impositions, are the necessary result of the state and circumstances wherein

(a) *Tillotson's Sermons in Folio*, vol. i.
(c) Luke xii. 4, 5.

(d) 2 Cor. iv. 17.

(b) *Stanhope's Sermons at Boyle's Lectures*.

we are placed : That the duty of denying ourselves arises from the corruption of the nature we are born with ; that of loving our enemies, from the very genius and foundation of the religion we live under ; and that of taking up our cross, from such prudential considerations as make us always choose the less evil ; and are all so suited to the reason of mankind, that we find some of the best improvers of it prescribing the same rules to their disciples ; (a) which is enough to convince us, that our Lord, who has opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers, ought not by any means to be accounted an hard master, when he imposes no other terms than the heathens thought fit to engage in, upon the mere spur of private conscience or public shame ; and that speechless, and without apology, a great part of the Christian world must needs stand in the day of enquiry, when it shall appear that Pythagoras, and Plato, and Zeno, could have their scholars run through such discipline, as necessary to the character of a virtuous man, which those who profess Christ are not ashamed to call foolish and needless, only because it is displeasing.

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

4. The other part of the Christian religion is, as we said, those doctrines which were designed for the direction of our faith, in matters that were not sufficiently revealed before.

(b) That there is one supreme, absolute, and independent cause, and original of all things, eternal, infinite, all-powerful, all-sufficient, the Maker and Lord of all things, himself derived from none, made of none, begotten of none, proceeding from none ; that by him all creatures, material and immaterial, visible and invisible, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational, mortal and immortal, in heaven and in earth, were made or created out of nothing : That having made the world at first, he still governs it by his perpetual Providence, insomuch, that the most fortuitous accident does not happen, "a sparrow does not fall to the ground, nor an hair from our heads," without his permission or direction ; that in the exercise of this his Providence, every thing is submitted to his will ; no strength can resist his power, no swiftness can flee from his presence, no secrecy can conceal from his knowledge, no art can evade his justice, and every creature participates of his goodness : That this infinite and almighty Being did, from all eternity, and long before any ages commenced, in an ineffable manner (which the Scriptures call generation) communicate the essence of the Godhead so entirely to his Son, as to make him the same with himself, very God of very God : That this eternal Son of God, having a being in the bosom of his Father, was partaker of his glory and power in the creation and government of the world, and, by the Divine appointment, is our Saviour, Mediator, Intercessor, and Judge : That having a tender compassion for sinful man, and willing to procure for him the grace of repentance, he voluntarily condescended to take our nature, with all its innocent infirmities, upon him : That in this nature (miraculously conceived, and born of a virgin) he lived a life, as we do, and was affected as we are (but without sin), revealed unto us his Father's will, and did many wonderful works in confirmation of his Divine mission : That after a life spent in doing good, he submitted, in his human nature, to a painful and ignominious death, that thereby he might make an atonement to God, and reconciliation for our sins : That after a stay of three days in the grave, by his Almighty power he raised himself to life again, conversed upon earth for the space of forty days, instructed his disciples in matters relating to his kingdom, and at length, in the sight of a great number of spectators, ascended visibly into heaven : That upon his ascension, he was exalted to the right hand of God, where he now makes intercession for us, and is invested with all power and authority, wherewith he governs the whole church, and is hereafter to judge the whole world : That upon his investiture, he soon sent down the Holy Ghost, the third Person in the ever-blessed Trinity, to be the immediate Comforter and Director

(a) *Young's Sermons*, vol. ii.

(b) *Clarke's Sermons*, vol. i.

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Vulg. Jer. 33,
&c. or 31.

of his apostles, to lead them into all truth, to inspire them with the gift of tongues, and to impart to their followers such other gifts as might best serve the end of their ministry: That this Blessed Spirit still continues with all good men, and (a) by illuminating their understandings, rectifying their wills and affections, renewing their natures, uniting their persons to Christ, and helping the infirmities of their prayers with his own intercession, is the great Sanctifier of their souls and bodies, in order to make them acceptable in the sight of God for ever:—These, together with the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and, after their reunion, an eternal state of misery or happiness in the other world, are the great and fundamental principles of the Christian religion, and mysteries, as the apostle (b) calls them, “which have been hid from ages, and from generations, but are now made manifest to the saints.”

“But how are these things made manifest (says the objector presently) when, notwithstanding all the pretended light of revelation, they still remain obscure and unintelligible? Some articles of the Christian faith, such as the existence of a God, the dispensations of Providence, the spirituality of our souls, a future state, and future judgement, we readily allow, because these are founded in the nature of things, and rise in the mind upon the disquisitions of reason; but, as for the stories of a Trinity in unity, a co-equality in the Son, the incarnation of a God, and the propitiation made by the Man Christ Jesus, of these we can frame no manner of conception, and therefore you must excuse us, if we do not believe them; for where is the crime of not performing impossibilities, or of not believing what does not appear to us to be true?”

It cannot be denied, indeed, but that in the Christian religion there are many great mysteries or doctrines, of too much sublimity for the powers of reason, unassisted by revelation, to find out, or when discovered fully to comprehend; but this is no more than what we might reasonably expect, considering the nature and quality of the things it treats of. In its main intendment, it is a kind of comment upon the Divine nature, or an instrument to convey right conceptions to the soul of man, as far as it is capable of receiving them. But now God, we know, is an infinite Being, without any bounds or limitations of his essence; wonderful in his actions, inconceivable in his purposes, and inexpressible in his attributes; and how can such vast and mighty things be crowded in a little finite understanding? How shall our poor, short faculties be able to measure the lengths of his eternity, the breadth and expansions of his immensity, the heights of his prescience, the depth of his decrees, and, least of all, the unutterable, incomprehensible mystery of two natures united into one person, and again of one and the same nature diffused into a triple personality? When a man that is born blind (as (c) one expresses it) shall be able, on hearsay, to conceive in his mind all the varieties and curiosities of colours, or to draw an exact scheme of some fine city, or map of some large province, then may we expect, in this degenerate state of our understanding, to comprehend the ways of the Almighty, and “by searching find out God:” But (to do justice to the argument on the other side) as it would be extremely foolish and irrational for a blind man to affirm, that there is no such thing as colours, or lines, or pictures, because he finds that he cannot form in his mind any true conception of them; so would it be equally, if not superlatively, more unreasonable, for us to deny the great mysteries of our faith, because the plummet of our reason will not reach them.

While we continue in this state of imperfection, we must be content (d) to know in part: A full and adequate conception of these sublime mysteries is reserved as a principal ingredient of our felicity and happiness above, when all the heights and depths, which we now stand amazed at, shall be made clear and familiar to us; when God shall display the hidden glories of his nature, the wonders of his Providence, and the

(a) *Pearson on the Creed.*
(d) 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

(b) Col. i. 26.

(c) *South's Sermons*, vol. i.

wisdom of his counsels; and withal fortify the eye of the soul to such a degree, as to make it able (as far as the capacities of an human intellect can be able) to behold and take them in.

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

To have a right notion of the doctrines of our religion, however, we are to distinguish between those things that are above reason, and incomprehensible, and those that are against reason, and utterly inconceivable. (a) Some things are above reason, because of their transcendent excellency and distance from us; whereas those that are against reason, involve a contradiction, and have a natural repugnancy to our understandings, which cannot conceive any thing that is formally impossible. And from hence it will follow, that though we neither can, nor should believe those things that are contrary to our reason, yet we both may, and ought to believe those that are above it: And the reason is (b), because the only evidence we can give of our acknowledging the infallible truth of God, is, by assenting to what he affirms upon his own authority.

In assenting to a proposition whose truth we perceive from the reason of the thing, we do not assent upon any authority at all. To such a proposition we should assent, though it were affirmed by the most fallible man, nay, though it were affirmed by the most notorious liar; and, consequently, our assenting to such a proposition, is no manner of proof that we acknowledge the infallible veracity of God. This can only appear by our assenting to a proposition whose truth we do not perceive by any evidence from the nature of the thing; for here we assent upon the simple authority of God's affirmation, and our assent is an explicit acknowledgment of his absolute veracity. If then it be reasonable to expect, in a Divine revelation, that God should require our acknowledgment of this attribute especially, and without such acknowledgment no revelation would be of any use, and if this acknowledgment can appear only by our assenting, upon the authority of God, to such propositions as we cannot perceive the truth of by any internal evidence; it certainly cannot be incongruous to expect such propositions in a Divine revelation: Nay, much more incongruous would it be, and (c) a probable objection against the divinity of any revelation, if we should not find some propositions of this kind in it, because it is hardly conceivable, why God should make an external revelation of those things only, which, by a due exercise of our reason, he has enabled us to find out. [What we find out by the due exercise of our reason, we do not *believe*, but *know*. The discoveries of reason deduced from self-evident truths are the objects, not of *faith*, but of *science*; and if faith be a Christian grace, there must be, in a religion revealed by God, truths not capable of demonstration.]

Seeing it is so far from being unreasonable then, that it is highly expedient, and in some sort necessary, that there should be some propositions above the reach of human understanding in every revelation that comes from God; if we can but shew, that in the Christian system there are no doctrines but such as stand clear of all absurdity and contradiction, the more abstruse and mysterious they are, the more they deserve our belief, for this very reason, because (d), if what is revealed concerning God were every way easy, and adapted to our comprehension, it could never reach, nor, with any fitness, represent that nature which we all allow to be incomprehensible.

The Holy Scriptures, for instance, teach us, that in the Divine nature (which can be but one) there are three distinct persons, to whom we ascribe the same attributes and perfections, the same worship and adoration. This indeed is a doctrine above our comprehension, as to the manner, how three should be one, and one three (e); but still we affirm, that there is no contradiction in it, if we will but distinguish between numbers and the nature of things. For three to be one indeed, is a contradiction in abstract numbers, but whether an infinite nature can communicate itself to three different

(a) *Bates's Harmony of the Divine Attributes.* (b) *Rogers's Necessity of a Divine Revelation.*
(c) *Law's Case of Reason.* (d) *Young's Sermons*, vol. ii. (e) *Stillingfleet's Sermons*.

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&c. or 31.

subsistences, without such a division as is among created beings, must not be determined by bare numbers, but by the absolute perfections of the Divine nature, which must be owned to be above our comprehension. The Holy Scriptures teach us, that the Son of God was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and that therefore our Redeemer was both God and Man in one person. This, we own, is, in its nature, one of the great mysteries of godliness, as St Paul calls it; but then we must remember, that in reality it is not much more difficult than the union of the soul and body in all mankind, which, however unaccountable it may be to our reason and imagination, is too certain, in fact, to be called in question. Once more, the Holy Scriptures teach us, that our Saviour Christ, who was both God and Man in one person, became the Redeemer of the world, by offering himself "a propitiation to God for sinners." This, in many respects, is a mystery too, and what we could not have known, had it not been revealed to us; but now that it is revealed, it is far from deserving the imputation of being absurd. (a) That all mankind are sinners, and have fallen from their primitive integrity, not only the Scriptures, but the constant experience of our own irregular appetites, is but too convincing a demonstration. Now, since this was our condition, and God was minded to rescue us from it, but entirely at liberty in what method to effect it; since the soul of our Saviour Christ was a free immaculate being, that might voluntarily suffer for us if he pleased, and, by the dignity of his nature, enhance the value of his sufferings to the full pardon of our sins, upon his Father's acceptance of a vicarious sacrifice; there appears nothing in this doctrine of Christ's satisfaction, (now that we have it fully revealed to us) but what corresponds with common reason, and all judicial proceedings among mankind.

These are some of the principal doctrines that we (as Christians) profess; and seeing they are free (when rightly considered) from all appearance of contradiction, (b) we may appeal to the judgment of any considerate person, whether it be not for the dignity and advantage of religion, that some articles of it should exceed the largest human comprehension: Whether we should entertain the same awful impressions of the Divine Majesty, if the perfections of his nature and operations were only such as we could see to the end of: Whether it does not raise the value of man's redemption, to have it brought about by miracles of mercy, not only without example, but even beyond our present understanding. Had all these things been less, we should indeed have known them better; but then, so much as we abate of their mysteriousness to bring them down to our capacity, so much we impair their dignity, and weaken the power of them upon our affections. It is therefore the very commendation (as we said before) and excellency of these doctrines, that they are so far above us; and we ought to esteem it an instance of the Divine goodness, no less than wisdom, so to have tempered his revelations, that we want no knowledge, which is necessary, to engage our piety and holy wonder, and yet have not so much as should destroy our humility and godly reverence; and, upon the whole, have reason to believe, that it could not have been better, nay, probably not near so well, if either less had been discovered to us, or less concealed from us.

The other doctrines which, in some measure, were discoverable by the strength of reason, but have been set in full light, and cleared of all their ambiguity and doubtfulness by the revelation of the Gospel, such as that of the being of a God, the inspection of his Providence, the supreme end of man, the immortality of his soul, the resurrection of his body, a future judgment, and an eternal state of happiness or misery hereafter, are so rational in themselves, and have so natural a tendency to what is the great end of all religion, the reformation of mens lives and tempers, that, a very small illustration will suffice to recommend them. For,

(a) What can be a more necessary and excellent foundation of true piety, than that doctrine which the Christian religion clearly and distinctly teaches us, concerning the nature and attributes of the only true God, who inhabiteth eternity, and yet humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and earth? What can afford more comfort and security in all conditions of life, than the sense of a Providence (by which the very (b) hairs of our head are numbered) concerning itself for our welfare, and for that reason bidding us (c) “to be careful for nothing, but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make our requests known unto God?” What can be a more effectual means to wean us from the love of the world and the allurements of sin, than to consider, that the proper and ultimate end of man is the fruition of God, and that though (d) “it does not yet appear what we shall be, yet this we know, that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is?” What a greater incitement to purity and holiness, to love, and hope, and heavenly-mindedness, than the assurance given us in the Gospel, that when we are (e) dissolved, we shall immediately be with Christ; that (f) “this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality;” that our souls, when they go hence, return to the God that gave them, and our bodies, when laid in the dust, after a short repose, are to be raised in power, and (g) fashioned like unto Christ’s glorious body? In fine, what stronger and more powerful motive to deter us from vice, and allure us to all kinds of virtue, than the discovery we have of God’s having “appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness, and (h) render unto every man according to his works; to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil.” So that the articles of our Christian faith, you see, are far from being arbitrary impositions, (i) calculated for the exercise of our credulity, or the gratification of our idle curiosity, but have an immediate relation to practice. They are indeed the genuine principles and foundations of all human and divine virtues; and, (k) taken altogether, make a far more rational and consistent scheme of belief, than what the wisest ancient philosopher ever thought of, or the most opinionative modern unbeliever ever yet contrived.

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

But beside these doctrines, there are two ordinances peculiar to the Christian religion, which have an equal tendency to practice, and are so far from being vain and superstitious, (l) (as some are pleased to call them) that they carry their own plea and justification along with them. For what reasonable man can pretend to say, that it is any wise superstitious, for every member of the society which Christ has instituted, to be solemnly admitted into the profession of his religion by a plain and significant rite, intitling him to all the privileges, and charging him with all the obligations, which belong to the members of that society as such, which is the design of one of the sacraments; or that it is unreasonable or superstitious for men frequently to commemorate, with all due thankfulness, the love of their greatest benefactor, and humbly and solemnly to renew their obligations and promises of obedience to him, which is the design of the other? But then, if we consider farther the manifold benefits which we receive from these sacramental ordinances; that, by the former, we are admitted to the pardon of all our sins, the assistance of Divine grace, the adoption of sons, and a title to a glorious inheritance; and that, by the latter, we have the covenant of mercy renewed, our breaches repaired, and our right to eternal happiness confirmed; that in both, in short, we are made and recognised to be the children of God; and “if children, then (accord-

- (a) Clarke’s Evidence. (b) Matth. x. 30. (c) Phil. iv. 6. (d) 1 John iii. 2.
 (e) Phil. i. 23. (f) 1 Cor. xv. 54. (g) Phil. iii. 21. (h) Rom. ii. 7, &c.
 (i) Archbishop Sharpe’s Sermons. (k) Clarke’s Evidence. (l) Vid. Christianity
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ing to that happy climax) are we heirs, heirs with God, and joint-heirs with Christ, to the intent that we may be glorified with him :”—If we consider these great privileges, I say, we shall soon perceive the wisdom and love of our Master and only Saviour, in thus (a) “opening to us a fountain for sin and for uncleanness,” and in thus giving us the (b) “medicine of immortality (as the ancients style the Eucharist), an antidote to preserve men from dying, and to give them a life that is everlasting.”

But whatever inherent efficacy some may think fit to ascribe, or deny to these sacred ordinances, it can hardly be thought, but that, since (when are they duly observed) they are productive of many virtues and good dispositions; (c) since, in the sacrament of baptism, we profess our sincere belief in the truth of that doctrine, which God the Father revealed by his blessed Son, and confirmed by the miraculous operations of the Holy Ghost; in it declare our humble acceptance of the overtures of mercy and grace, purchased for us by our Saviour, and in this sacrament exhibited to us; in it acknowledge our obligations to all piety, righteousness, and sobriety, as loyal subjects, faithful servants, and dutiful children to God; and in it devote ourselves to the faith and obedience of God the Father, our great and glorious Maker, of God the Son, our great and gracious Redeemer, and of God the Holy Ghost, our blessed Guide and Comforter: And, in like manner, since a devout reception of the supper of our Lord exercises and excites in us an awful sense of mind, answerable to the greatness and holiness of him, whom, at that time, we approach; an hearty contrition for our sins, which exposed our Saviour to such pains and agonies, as are therein remembered; a fervent love and gratitude to him, for his wonderful goodness and love to us; a deep humility, upon the sense of our unworthiness to receive such testimonies of his favour; a pious joy, in consideration of the excellent fruits accruing to us from his performances; a comfortable hope of obtaining the benefits of his passion, by the assistance of his grace; and, lastly, an enlarged good will and charity to all our brethren, as being made heirs of the same hope, and not only washed in the same baptism, but fed at the same table with ourselves; since these, I say, are the graces and benefits which accrue to us by these holy ordinances, we cannot but applaud the wisdom of their institution, which affords such mighty helps to our Christian progress, and, by the blessing of God, are the happy instruments both of our living well, and our living for ever.

From this brief review of the Christian religion, it appears, that the purity and practicableness of its precepts, the truth and sublimity of its doctrines, and the wisdom and piety of its sacramental institutions, cannot but recommend it to every man's conscience, that is neither bribed with vice, nor tinctured with infidelity; for (d) “if our Gospel be hid, if the beauty and excellency of our holy religion be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, (who is the image of God) should shine unto them”.

(e) And now, methinks, we may with some confidence challenge any religion in the world, to shew us such a complete body and collection of doctrines, both speculative and practical; of mysteries more sublime and rational withal, more agreeable to the Divine nature, and more perfective of human understanding; and of rules and precepts that would make men more pious and devout, more holy and sober, more just and fair in their dealings, better friends and better neighbours, better magistrates, better subjects, and better in all relations, than what we find recorded in the Gospel.

Were there no other argument of the Divinity of the Christian religion, but only the excellency of the doctrines which it teaches, this would be enough to convince any

(a) Zech. xiii. 1.
(d) 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

(b) Ignat. Epist. ad. Eph.

(c) Barrow on the Sacraments,

(e) Tillotson's Sermons, in folio. vol. i.

considering man, that it came from God. (a) For, if it were nothing else but the result of natural reasoning, why should not other religions in the world, and other systems of morality, be as good as this? How comes the doctrine of Jesus Christ to excel those of all the famous legislators and philosophers in the world? how comes an obscure person in Judea to draw up such an admirable scheme of ethics, that whatever is laid down by the Lycurguss, and Numas, and Platos, and Aristotles, should not be comparable to it? how should he, in one or two years preaching, nay, in one short sermon, advance the practical doctrines to a greater height and perfection than ever they were brought to by any of the sects of philosophers, who had made it their business to study them for some ages? Most certainly, unless God had been assisting in contriving this new model of the morality of Jesus Christ, it is impossible that it could ever have equalled, much less so far exceeded, that of the Grecian schools, which had all the human advantages that he wanted on their side.

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

It cannot be denied indeed, but that, almost in every age, there have been in the heathen world some wise, brave, and good men, who have carried human reason to a great height, and, in the study and disquisition of natural religion, have made no mean discoveries; but then there is room to suspect, that their discoveries of this kind were not so much owing to the strength and sagacity of their own reason, as to the traditions they might receive from their ancestors, or the conversation they might have with the Hebrews, who had all their instruction from revelation.

That there were certain principles delivered by God to Noah, and by him propagated among his posterity, through all ages and nations, is what we may easily conceive; and thence we may suppose, that many points which seem now to be deductions from natural reason, might have their original from revelation, because things once discovered, may seem easy and obvious to men, which they notwithstanding would never of themselves have been able to find out.

However this be, it is certain, that as the ancient philosophers might borrow many helps from their knowledge of the Jewish religion, which was the only revelation then pretended to; so (b) whoever compares the writings of later philosophers, of Epictetus, Antoninus, and some others, who lived since the Gospel got footing in the world, with theirs who went before them, will find so manifest a difference, so much more unaffected solidity, and so near a resemblance to some of the most exalted Christian precepts, as cannot well be accounted for, without supposing some acquaintance with a set of principles which they could not but approve and admire, and affected to engraft into their own systems of morality, though they never expressly avowed the authority on which they stand. These were great helps; and it is no wonder that, under the influence of these, they wrote so well. But if we look into the tracks of those that went before them, and were unassisted by revelation, we shall find them miserably ignorant of many important points that are delivered to us with the greatest perspicuity.

They were ignorant of the creation of the world, and the origin of mankind; for such of them as were theists believed the world to have existed from all eternity in its present state (c), and we have seen (d) by what absurd hypotheses they pretended to account for the origin of the human race. They perplexed themselves about the rise of moral evil; for which, as they could not account, they could conceive no means by which it was to be removed. They were acquainted with no form of worship, which, in the opinion of the wiser part of them, could be acceptable to God, nor with any means of appeasing his displeasure; and they were quite ignorant of the method which he in his eternal counsel had ordained for the recovery of lost man, without any infraction upon

(a) *Nichols's Conference with the Theist*, Vol. ii. part iv.
Boyle's Lectures.
Legation of Moses.

(b) *Stanhope's Sermons*, at

(c) See this completely proved in Warburton's *Divine*

(d) *Introduction to the History of the Old Testament*.

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his own attributes. They had but confused notions of the nature of the Supreme Being, and talked very inconsistently of the *summum bonum*, or ultimate felicity of man. They taught but little of God's exceeding love towards us, and desire of our happiness; and were entirely silent as to the Divine grace, and assistance towards our attainment of virtue, and perseverance in it. The immortality of the soul was to them a moot point: The certainty of a future state they were not well agreed in; and as for the resurrection of the body, this, (a) in their very seats of learning, was thought a doctrine highly absurd and ridiculous. So doubtful, so ignorant were they in those main and fundamental points, which are the great restraints of our inordinate appetites; and therefore no wonder if, (b) "having their understanding darkened, (as the apostle describes them) and being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that was in them, they gave themselves up unto lasciviousness, and to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Nay, well had it been had they confined their lewdness and debauchery within private walls; but the misfortune was, that they entered their temples, and made no small part of their religious worship. * They deified the worst of men, a drunken Bacchus, an effeminate Ganymede, a Romulus unnatural to his brother, a Jupiter as unnatural to his father. (c) They paid adoration, not only to the ghosts of such as these, but to birds, and beasts, and creeping things, and even to the devil himself, under images of such hideous forms and shapes as were frightful to behold. Nay, and in the worship of him, they made their altars smoke with the blood of human sacrifices, of their sons and their daughters; and that in some places every day, and upon extraordinary emergencies (even as it is the practice of some Pagan countries at this very time) in whole hecatombs. So blinded were the eyes of their understanding, and so hardened their hearts against all tender impressions, by the deceitfulness of sin, and the infatuation of the devil.

Men may talk of the natural light and power of reason as long as they please; and the topic perhaps is well enough for popular eloquence to flourish upon: But when we appeal to experience, we shall soon find it empty boast and pompous harangue. If ever there was a time when human reason might be a guide in matters of religion, (d) it was when our Saviour came into the world, or some time before; when knowledge of all kinds, and particularly the study of philosophy, was cultivated and improved with the greatest application, and by the ablest hands: And yet it is hardly possible to read the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans without amazement, and many mortifying reflections, to find rational creatures capable of so wretched a degeneracy, as to verify the apostle's description of them, when he tells us, that they (e) "were filled with unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; were full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; were whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things; were disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, un-

(a) Acts xvii. (b) Eph. iv. 18, 19.

* Can any thing be so stupid as to load the Divine nature with so many crimes and imperfections as the heathen theology does? To make one god; and that the supreme god too, an adulterer, and another a pimp; one goddess a scold, and another a whore; to stock heaven with strumpets, and sodomites, and drunkards, and bastards; to make their deities fighting and quarrelling, dissembling and lying; to be lame, and blind, and old, and wounded? Can any thing be more foolish than the stories of their theogony; of their gods, not only begetting children like men, but eating them like cannibals; their battles with Titans

and giants, and their running out of heaven, for security upon earth? What wretched silly stuff is the history of their demi-gods, or heroes, of Perseus, Theseus, Orpheus, and all the other contradictory tales which we read of in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which is nothing else but a compendium of the heathen divinity? *Nichols's Conference with the Theist*, vol. ii. part 4.

(c) *Jenkins's Reasonableness of the Christian Religion*, vol. i.

(d) *Bishop of London's (Gibson's) Second Pastoral Letter*.

(e) *Rom. i. 29, &c.*

merciful; and (what is worse still) not only did these things themselves, but took pleasure likewise in those that did them."

In this light it is that the apostle represents the state of the heathen world, while it was under the guidance of unassisted reason: And if our reason seems to guide us any better now; if it rejects those detestable deeds of darkness and impious modes of worship which it once revered and embraced, it is not because its faculties are in themselves any clearer or stronger than they were, but because it has submitted its weakness and ignorance, its pride and passions, to the light and authority of the Christian revelation. (a) Take but away the direction and restraint of this authority, and it will act just as it did, and relapse into the same extravagances, the same impiety, the same folly and superstition, that prevailed on it before.

And if the Pagan religion, when supported with the highest improvements of human understanding, fell so far short of being a rational service, what shall we say to the Mahometan, which envelops itself in ignorance, and makes its main foundation the gratification of mens brutal lusts and appetites? One would really wonder how so corrupt an institution came to spread so wide in the world, but that there was a concurrence of circumstances, at that time, which did not a little contribute to its propagation.

(b) When Constantine and his followers had made the profession of the Christian religion not only safe, but honourable, bishops grew ambitious, and minded nothing so much as their advancement to the best preferments. Schisms and heresies overran the church. Rites and ceremonies were more esteemed than purity of heart; and a general corruption infected both clergy and laity alike. This juncture God, in his just judgment, permitted Mahomet to lay hold on, to set up a new religion, (c) which being a kind of medley, made up of Judaism, the several heresies then in the East, and the old Pagan rites of the Arabs, (with an indulgence to all sensual delights, and the inforcement of secular power and violence), did too well answer his design in drawing or forcing men of all sorts to the profession of it; insomuch, that it soon gave birth to an empire, which, in eighty years time, extended its dominions over more kingdoms and countries than ever the Roman could in eight hundred. And although it continued in its strength not above three hundred years, yet out of its ashes have sprung up many other kingdoms and empires, of which there are three at this day the largest and most potent upon the face of the earth, viz. the empire of Turkey, the empire of Persia, and the empire of the Mogul in India, which God, in his all-wise Providence, has permitted still to continue, for a scourge unto us Christians, who, having received so holy and so excellent a religion through his mercy to us in Christ Jesus our Lord, will not yet conform ourselves to live worthy of it *.

This we must observe, however, that God does not always approve those actions and designs, which, to demonstrate the wisdom of his Providence, he is sometimes pleased to permit and prosper; that a religion propagated by force, and supported by methods of external strength, is so far destitute of any proof that its original is from heaven; and that, when it contains such doctrines as are repugnant to the dictates of right reason, or the known properties and attributes of God, it can be the product of nothing else but human invention.

(a) *Rogers's Necessity of Divine Revelation.*

(b) *Grotius, de Verit. lib. vi.*

(c) *Prideaux's Life of Mahomet.*

* [Since the period at which our author wrote, the extent and power of these empires have been greatly diminished; whilst that of the Mogul has been in fact annihilated. But we lately saw another power, founded in atheism, spread its dominion, un-

doubtedly for the same purpose, over all the Christian states of Europe. It too has been overturned; but whether Christians have really profited by the severe chastisement which they received, can be ascertained only by their conduct during the peace of the world, which has yet been of very short duration.]

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(a) When therefore we find Mahomet establishing his religion by the dint of the sword, persecuting with war all that would not submit to it; and threatening with no less than death all that pretended to dispute the least article of it; (b) whereas the Christian, quite otherwise, was planted in weakness and disgrace, in tears, and prayers, and patience, and watered with the blood of many thousands of its professors: When we find him allowing of fornication, justifying adultery, and talking of war, rapine, and slaughter, as things enjoined and commanded by Almighty God; whereas, what we have learned from Christ and his apostles, is, (c) “to possess every one his vessel in sanctification and honour; not in the lust of concupiscence; to live peaceably with all men;” and instead of invading any other’s property, (d) “to take joyfully the spoiling of our goods, knowing that we have in heaven a better and an enduring substance:” When we find him, the better to allure his followers, telling them (e) of pleasant gardens, curious fountains, delicate beds, and beautiful women with black eyes and fair complexions in Paradise, with whom they shall enjoy continual pleasures, and solace themselves with amorous delights to all eternity; whereas we are told, that in the resurrection we (f) “neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven,” where we shall come to company suitable to our glorified natures, (g) “to the general assembly and church of the first-born, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to an innumerable company of angels, to God the Judge of all, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant:” When we compare these things together, I say, we shall find the one abhorrent to the nature of God, injurious to the dignity of mankind, and a contradiction to that eternal law of righteousness which is written in every one’s breast; but the other agreeable to the notions we have of the Supreme Being, and consonant to the rational dictates of our nature.

If we proceed to compare the transactions of Christ’s life with those that are related of Mahomet; how our Blessed (h) “Saviour went about doing good, healing all manner of sickness and of disease among the people, giving sight to the blind, and feet to the lame, and life to the dead;” how the miracles which he wrought were solemn and grave, acts of his love to mankind, and demonstrations of his omnipotence; and (i) how those who embraced his religion, in virtue of those miracles, were men of innocence and simplicity, who lived good lives, and feared God, and were therefore under the Divine protection, secured from the deceivableness of error; whereas the followers of Mahomet were a gang of robbers and plunderers, void of all piety, and all humanity; himself a bold ambitious man, greedy of empire, and resolved to raise himself even at the destruction of his fellow creatures; and the miracles reported of him, (such as (k) his cleaving the moon in two; the trees going out to meet him; the stones saluting him; the camel and the shoulder of mutton speaking to him; and his wonderful journey to heaven, with all the strange sights he there beheld), are, to the highest degree, absurd * and ridiculous: If we compare these things together, I say, we shall soon perceive in whom the characters of a true prophet meet, and who is to be deemed the wicked impostor; whose

(a) *Prideaux’s Life of Mahomet.*

(b) *Stanhope’s Sermons at Boyle’s Lectures.*

(c) 1 Thess. iv. 4, 5.

(e) *Prideaux’s Life of Mahomet.*

(f) Matth. xxii. 30.

(h) Matth. iv. 24.

(k) *Prideaux’s Life of Mahomet.*

(d) Heb. x. 34.

(g) Heb. xii. 23, 24.

(i) *Grotius de Verit.*

* What strange stuff do we find in the Alcoran about the angel of death, whose head is so big, that, from one eye to another is a journey of a thousand and seventy days; of the angels in the sixth heaven, one of which has seventy thousand heads, and as many tongues; of the cow supporting the earth, which

has four hundred horns, and, from one horn to another, is a journey of a thousand years; of the angels which support the throne of God, and have heads so big, that a bird cannot fly from one ear to another; of the key of the treasury of one of Moses’s subjects, which was so heavy, that it weighed down a camel; and of the wives, and different shapes of angels, some of which are like men, others like horses, bulls, and cocks, &c. with many more nonsensical absurdities of the like nature. *Nichols’s conference with the Theist*, vol. ii. part iv. [See likewise *White’s Bampton Lectures*.]

religion was intended to civilize and sanctify human nature, and consequently is the gift of God; and whose calculated to gratify the cruel and carnal appetites of rude barbarians, and consequently is the forgery of man.

The Jewish religion indeed derived its origin from heaven, and Moses seems to glory in the excellency of its institutes, when he asks the people. (a) "What nation is there so great, that has statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law which I set before you this day?" and yet, if we were to descend to an examination, we should soon perceive in many great discoveries, the pre-eminence of the Gospel above the law.

(b) 1. That there is a God, and that there is but one God; that the only one God is incorporeal, invisible, immortal, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, of infinite justice, wisdom and goodness, the Maker of heaven and earth, the Supreme Governor of the world, and of all things therein, and a gracious rewarder of those that seek him, is absolutely necessary to be known by all who would attain eternal life; and it cannot be doubted, but that the faithful, from the beginning, had this knowledge of God; but then, before the coming of Christ, they had not so certain, so clear, and so distinct a knowledge of these things as we have now under the Gospel. For over and above the knowledge of these things, which the pious, before Moses, had either from a serious contemplation of the works of God, or from the tradition and instruction of the patriarchs, and which the Jews, in succeeding ages, had from the writings of Moses and the prophets; we Christians have a more clear, more distinct, and evident manifestation thereof from the books of the evangelists and apostles.

The faithful, under the Jewish dispensation, did, without doubt, believe God to be an invisible and omnipresent Spirit; and yet his frequent appearances, sometimes under one resemblance, and sometimes under another, the building of an ark, a tabernacle, and temple, whither he was pleased to call his people together into his immediate presence, and to talk with them (as Moses (c) expresses it) face to face, must necessarily turn their eyes and minds towards the mercy-seat; make them apprehend God shut up, as it were, within the holy of holies, and consequently perplex and obscure their notions of his spirituality and omnipresence: Whereas there is no room now, under the Gospel, for any gross conceptions of the Deity, when we are called upon, not to turn our eyes towards a visible tabernacle, but (d) "to pray everywhere, in any place, lifting up holy hands;" and are taught by Christ, (e) that "God is a Spirit, and that they who worship him, worship him in spirit and in truth."

The believers under the law were persuaded, that all things were ordered and governed by an all-wise and all-powerful Being; and yet the most sagacious of them were not able to account for the justice of Divine Providence, in suffering the wicked to prosper, and the righteous to be afflicted. But now this difficulty every common Christian is able to solve, by the help of what he has learned from the Gospel concerning the retributions of a future state; and can apply to all such cases the reflection made by Abraham, on the rich man's desire of some relief from Lazarus, (f) "Son, remember that thou, in thy lifetime, receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."

2. The nature and obliquity of sin is what men, in all ages, could not but perceive; but how to account for its cause and origin they were at a strange loss: And therefore some imagined a pre-existent state, from whence they brought depravity along with them; while others devised two contrary principles, equally actuating the world, the one the author of all the good, and the other of all the evil they did. (g) "The wickedness of man (as Moses tells us) was great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was evil continually;" but whether these expressions are to be ex-

From Matt. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

(a) Deut. iv. 8.
(e) John iv. 24.

(b) *Smalridge's Sermons.*
(f) Luke xvi. 25.

(c) Deut. v. 4.
(g) Gen. vi. 5.

(d) 1 Tim. ii. 8.

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tended to the whole race of mankind, and so are a proof of the general depravation, has been doubted by some; whereas all such doubts must now be silenced by the plain assertions in the New Testament, that (a) "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin," so that, (b) "by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation;" that all who are of the race of mankind "are sinners, ungodly, enemies of God children of the devil, and by (c) nature the children of wrath; that (d) when they would do good, evil is present with them, having a law in their members warring against the law of their mind, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin;" and that this is the state of depraved nature, wherein men are born, (e) and wherein those that live and die shall (f) "be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

3. And as the Gospel gives us a more distinct account of the origin and demerit of sin, so does it furnish us with a clearer discovery of the method whereby the guilt of it is atoned. Those who lived under the Mosaic dispensation were saved by the same means of redemption as we who live under the evangelical; but the mystery of our common redemption was not, in any degree, so fully manifested to them as it is to us: And hence it is, that the apostle compares the writings of the Old Testament to a (g) light, or (as the original is) to a candle shining in a dark place; but the revelation which was made by Christ in the Gospel, to the day-dawn, and the day-star arising in our hearts. The revelation made to the Jews was to them a light, but a faint one; it shone, but in a dark place. The nativity, life, and death of Christ, the several offices of his Mediatorship, the remission of our sins through his blood, the sanctification of our hearts by his Spirit, and the glories of the world to come, were taught them, not in words at length, but in figures, and a dark vail was over the writings, as well as over (h) the face of Moses, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold his doctrine any more than they could his countenance. In a word, (i) they were saved, as well as we, by the blood of Christ; but there was as great a difference between their knowledge of the mystery of our redemption by the sacrifice of the death of Christ and ours, as there was between that dark cloud wherewith God led the people at one time, and that pillar of light wherewith he guided them at another.

4. And as the Gospel gives us clearer notions of the expiation of sin, so does it exhibit a fuller assurance of our being justified, or having our sins pardoned thereby. Religious persons who lived before the coming of Christ, knew that they were sinners, and that they therefore had need of the mercy and favour of God for the remission of their sins; but then, being not sufficiently instructed in the method of obtaining God's favour, they could not but groan sorely under the weight of them. Severe curses were denounced in the law against all who should in any case transgress it; these curses were plain, and easy to be understood; but the promises of a pardon, through the merits of a Saviour, were more intricate and involved. When therefore the danger which threatened them was so apparent, and the methods of their escape so obscurely notified to them, it is no wonder if their fears did very much overbalance their hopes. Hence it is, that the spirit by which they were governed is, in the Gospel, represented as a spirit of bondage, but the spirit by which we Christians are influenced is a spirit of adoption: (k) "Ye have not now, says the apostle, received the spirit of bondage again unto fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, ABBA, FATHER," i. e. whereby we are as well assured of the love of God as a child is of the affection of an indulgent father; as surely entitled to the joys of heaven as an adopted son is to the inheritance of him, who therefore adopted him, that he might make him his heir; for

(a) Rom. v. 21. (b) Ibid. ver. 18. (c) Eph. ii. 3. (d) Rom. vii. 21, 23.
(e) See the Appendix to the *Dissertation on Original Sin*, vol. i. (f) 2 Thess. i. 9.
(g) 2 Pet. i. 19. (h) 2 Cor. iii. 7. (i) *Smalbridge's Sermons*. (k) Rom. viii. 15, &c.

(as the apostle goes on to display the privileges of the Christian dispensation) “the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.”

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end,

5. And as the assurances given us of this inheritance are greater; so, lastly, is the inheritance itself much more plainly revealed to us in the Gospel than ever it was before. Whatever could be learned of a future state from the light of reason, that, and much more, was known to the Jews: What by reason and by revelation was made known to the Jews concerning an immortal life, that, and much more, is manifested to us Christians. The texts in which a future state is revealed to the Jews are few, and here and there thinly scattered in some particular books of the Old Testament; but there is no one book, scarce one chapter, in which this doctrine is not taught in the New. Those in the Old Testament are not so clear of ambiguity, but that they are capable of another interpretation; those in the New are so plain and perspicuous, that there is no room for the most ignorant to misapprehend, or the most impious to pervert them: And therefore it is with great justice, that the author of the epistle to the Hebrews (who himself was excellently versed in the knowledge of the Jewish law) hath observed, that (a) the “law had only the shadow of good things to come, but not the very image of the things,” i. e. it did but obscurely and faintly typify the glories of heaven; not give us so bright an image, and so lively a representation of the rewards of another world, as is pictured out to us, and, in all its full proportion and lineaments, accurately described in the Gospel.

(b) Upon the whole therefore it appears, how incomparably happy we Christians are under the Gospel, above what the Jews were in the time of the Law, God having placed us under the best of dispensations, under the clearest discoveries and revelations, and given us the most noble, rational, and masculine religion; a religion the most perfective of our natures, and most conducive to our happiness. And what indeed can be a nobler privilege, what a more generous and delightful pleasure, what a more powerful incentive to obedience, than for a rational creature clearly to discern the equity, the necessity, the benefit, the decency, and beauty of every action he is called upon to do; and thence to be duly sensible how gracious a Master he serves; one who is so far from loading him with fruitless and arbitrary impositions, that each command, abstracted from his authority who gives it, is able to recommend itself, and nothing required but what every wise man would choose of his own accord, and cannot, without being his own enemy, so much as wish to be exempted from? (c) “Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see (says our Saviour to his disciples, and in them, to all professors of his religion in succeeding generations); for I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.” But in vain were these great privileges conferred on us, unless we make an answerable improvement of them; and far from blessed shall we be, when we come to appear before the dread tribunal, unless we endeavour (d) “in all things to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

(a) Heb. x. 1.

(b) *Cave*, in his Apparatus to the Lives of the Apostles.

(c) Luke x. 23, 24.

(d) Titus ii. 10, 14.

SUPPLEMENTARY DISSERTATION

ON SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL DOCTRINES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

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&c. or 31.

[THE preceding view of the Christian religion is on the whole just and beautiful. Many readers indeed will question whether the author had an accurate knowledge of the object of the Jewish law, and of the purposes which it was intended to serve in the economy of grace; but to the private Christian this is a matter of comparatively little importance. The distinguishing doctrine of our religion, and that in which we must repose all our hopes of future happiness, is the redemption of man by the death and sacrifice of Christ on the cross; and yet there is no doctrine, which has given occasion to more numerous or more acrimonious controversies among those, who call themselves Christians. It has been questioned, whether the death of Jesus of Nazareth can be considered as in any sense an atonement for the sins of men; whether, if it be an atonement, he died for *all* men, or only for those, who shall be placed on his right hand at the judgment of the last day, and invited to take possession of the kingdom prepared for them from the beginning of the world; and what are the conditions—if there be any conditions, on which those, for whom he died, are to be justified, or reap all the benefits, for the obtaining of which he condescended to die for them.

Our author has hardly entered at all into these controversies, or even stated the doctrine of redemption in such terms, as to furnish his readers with a clue to guide them through the labyrinth, in which, if they be conversant with the systems of the different sects of Christians, they must feel themselves to be in some degree intangled. He has indeed said enough to direct in his duty, the plain man, who is an absolute stranger to these systems, and ready to receive the simple truth as it is in Jesus; but, in this age, there is no Christian who can read, or who is in the too general practice of “heaping to himself teachers, having itching ears,” who can be an absolute stranger to the different views of this great doctrine, which are everywhere obtruded on him by teachers presuming to be wise “above that which is written.”

I will endeavour to supply what our author has omitted; and as it appears to me that most of the controversies, which, on this great doctrine, divide the Church of Christ, have arisen from men losing sight of the original purpose for which a Mediator was introduced between God and the human race, and then teaching, as separate and unconnected truths, propositions which are in reality dependant on each other, I will adopt a different method of procedure, and treat of redemption, regeneration, sanctification, and justification; as doctrines, which, though different in themselves, are so closely linked together, that they cannot be stated intelligibly but with reference to each other.

The first thing to be done is to ascertain, Whether the death of Christ can be considered as, in any sense, a sacrifice or atonement for sin? But this, I think, could never have been made a question among those who admit the inspiration and authority of the New Testament, had not the doctrine of atonement and redemption been stated in terms to which the Sacred Scriptures give no countenance. We are expressly told by

our Lord himself (a), that he came into the world “to give his life a ransom for many,” and by St Paul (b), that “he gave himself a ransom for all.” The same apostle says elsewhere (c), that “when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly;” that “God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us;” that “when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; and that we joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement,” or been taken into favour by an exchange of sufferings (d). The same apostle assures us (e) that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ (διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ); whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (ἱλαστήριον) through faith in his blood;” and, in perfect harmony with him, St John says (f), that “if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation (ἱλασμός) for our sins; and not for ours, or for those of any particular class of men only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” The import of the words ἀπολυτρώσις, ἱλασμός and ἱλαστήριον is so perfectly ascertained, that there can be no doubt whatever, but that, according to the doctrine of St Paul and St John, the death of Christ was an expiatory sacrifice, and that he suffered for the sins of men—the just for the unjust, the righteous for the wicked.

But is it not unjust to punish the innocent for the guilty? and can we believe that an act of injustice makes an essential part of any dispensation of God to man? We certainly cannot believe any such thing; for God is not only just, but merciful, and no act of injustice was ever approved by him. To punish an innocent person for the guilty, were it possible to do so, would indeed be unjust; but this is not possible, for the very notion of punishment involves in it the sufferer's consciousness of guilt; and as our Saviour was conscious of no such thing, it can with no propriety be said that he was punished in our stead. He suffered indeed in our stead, and his sufferings made atonement for our sins, reconciled us to God, and opened again the kingdom of heaven, which had been shut against every individual of the human race. That there is no injustice in this, nor any thing difficult to be believed, will be evident, I think, when we have duly considered the purpose for which Christ was first promised to fallen man, and in due time “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” Now, the apostle assures us, that the purpose for which he submitted to all this, was, “that through death he might destroy him, who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (g).”

How the devil came to have the power of death, and what is meant by that death which he brought upon the first pair, and, through them, on all their posterity, I have endeavoured elsewhere to shew (h); and as the promise of redemption was first made on that occasion, just before the merciful God pronounced sentence on the guilty pair, there can be no doubt but that the promise implied future deliverance from that death, to which he was then about to doom them. To our first parents it could not be supposed to imply any thing more; for they were not aware of having incurred any other penalty. But surely there is nothing unjust or unreasonable in the Judge of all the earth accepting of the temporary death of one man, in order to prevent the eternal death or everlasting extinction of the whole human race. How many great commanders have exposed part of their armies to inevitable destruction, when no other means were left to them of preserving the remainder or of ensuring victory? And how often have the

(a) St Matt. xx. 28. Mark x. 45.

(b) 1 Tim. ii. 6.

(c) Romans v. 6—12.

(d) See Schleusner on the words καταλλαγὴ καταλλάσσω.

(e) Rom. iii. 23—26.

(f) 1 John ii. 1, 2.

(g) Heb. ii. 14, 15.

(h) Vol. i. of this Work, Appendix to Dissertation iii.

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leaders of those detachments marched bravely to their posts, aware, all the while, that they were doomed to destruction for the preservation of their country? No man ever thought that there was injustice in such conduct, or condemned the commander-in-chief for ordering, in such circumstances, a detachment on so forlorn a hope, or the commander of the detachment for obeying his superior. No man ever condemned an individual for devoting himself to certain death for the deliverance of his country. When Eustace de St Pierre and his six heroic companions gave themselves up at the siege of Calais, for the safety of their townsmen, (a) they were not considered as self-murderers; nor was the governor of the place condemned as unjust for permitting such a sacrifice for the deliverance of those who were entrusted to his care, and whom he could, by no other means, preserve from indiscriminate destruction. That Samson was guilty of nothing wrong or unjust, when he overthrew the temple of Dagon on the enemies of his country, though he was perfectly aware that he was to involve himself in the same ruin with them, is placed beyond all controversy, by his being endowed with supernatural strength to perform that exploit; and no man who has reflected seriously on the history of that judge of Israel, ever ranked his last exploit among his many imprudencies. On the contrary, such conduct, wherever it has been *necessary*, has been applauded by all men; and why should the perverseness of infidelity suppose that there was any thing unjust or unreasonable in the Son of God's taking upon him human nature, that by dying in that nature for a time, he might redeem the whole race from death eternal, or utter extinction?

Our Saviour is nowhere said to have been *punished* for Adam's sin; nor indeed are we *punished* for it, though in consequence of his fall we are doomed to a temporary, as we should have been to eternal death, but for the interposition of the second Adam. It was not of any thing due to us by *nature*, or which we could have *merited* of God as wages for our services, that we were deprived by the apostacy (for such it was) of our first parents, but of a *free gift*, which, when once forfeited, might have been restored on any condition that should seem fittest to the All-wise and All-powerful Author of the gift. It might, indeed, for any thing that we can conceive to the contrary, have been restored without any condition at all, had man been the only free and moral agent among all the creatures of God. But man is not the only moral agent among the creatures of God; and therefore some atonement may have been, and undoubtedly was, necessary, as a warning, to such of them as had not yet fallen, that though God's mercies are infinite and over all his works, he will yet by some means or other enforce obedience to all his laws—positive as well as moral. Hence it seems to be, that St Paul represents one object of the preaching “of the unsearchable riches of Christ” to have been, that “unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be made known (*γνωρισθῇ*) by the church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord (b).”

That Christ died, therefore, to restore mankind to that life, which had been forfeited by the fall of Adam, is as certain as that the Scriptures of the New Testament are the word of God; and since we are assured (c) that “as by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; and that as in Adam *all* die, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive,” it is equally certain that he died for *all men* without exception. For, as St Paul informs Timothy, (d) “there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom (*ἀντίλυτρον*) for *ALL*, to be testified in due time.”

That this last clause—to be testified in due time—refers to the resurrection of the dead, I am decidedly of opinion; but as the generality of commentators think otherwise, I

(a) *Hume's History of England*, Chap. xv. (b) Eph. iii. 10, 11. See Whitby on the place, and Dr Nares's ingenious work, entitled *Εἰς Θεός; Εἰς Μισοίτης*. (c) 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. (d) 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.

have no occasion to insist upon it, because the same apostle elsewhere (a) teaches, in the plainest terms, that the resurrection of the body will alone complete the redemption of man. "For I reckon (says he) that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the *redemption of our body*."

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

That the word *κτίσις*, here translated *creature* and *creation*, means only the rational part of the creation, and once, more especially the Gentiles and unbelieving Jews as distinguished from the Christians, is evident from the general sense of the whole passage, as well as from the use of the word elsewhere in the New Testament *. It was only the rational part of the creation, and indeed only the Christians, that could compare the sufferings of the present time with the glory which was to be revealed in them. They were the Christians alone that earnestly expected, and patiently waited for the manifestation of the sons of God. It is the rational part of the creation alone that can be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the *children of God*; and it can be only of the Gentiles and unbelieving Jews, together with the Christians, that the apostle is speaking, when he says, that "not only *they*, but *ourselves* also, even we ourselves, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, &c."

But the question is, What are the vanity and corruption, to which mankind are here said to have been made subject, and from which they are at some time to be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God? To this question two answers have been given, though, when considered in connection with the context, it seems to me to admit of but one. Several modern divines of very considerable eminence think, that the vanity to which the creature was made subject, and the pain and corruption under which the whole creation groaned, were the impious doctrines and immoral practices of the heathen world; and in support of this opinion they appeal to those texts in the Psalms and other books of Holy Scripture, in which the idolatrous worship of the Gentiles is called *vanity* and lying *vanities*.

Now, it cannot be denied that the Psalmist (b) calls idolaters "such as love *vanity*, and lift up their souls unto *vanity*;" that he expresses his contempt and abhorrence of the divinations and oracles of the heathen, by calling them "*lying vanities*;" or that God himself gives this designation to the idolatries of the Israelites, when he says,—(c) "They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their *vanities*." It does not, however, follow from all this, that *vanity* has no other signification in Scripture than the idolatrous practices of the heathen, or the frequent apostacies of the Jews; and it cannot possibly have that signification here.

The apostle says expressly, that the creature was made subject to the vanity of which he is speaking, *not willingly* (*ὀυχ' ἐκούσα*—not of his own accord or by himself), "but by him who hath subjected the same under (d) hope," (*διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντά ἐν ἐλπίδι*). Who

(a) Rom. viii. 18, &c.

and *Lightfoot's* Horæ Hebraicæ in Evangelium Marci. Oper. tom. ii. p. 468. ed. Roterod. 1686.

(b) Psal. iv. 2. xxiv. 4. and xxxi. 6. the word *vanities*.

* See St Mark xv. 15. Coloss. i. 23.; *Schleusner* on the word *κτίσις*,

(c) Deut. xxxii. 21.

(d) See *Schleusner* on

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subjected the creature to *idolatry*? Certainly not God, but the devil. But what were the hopes held out to that creature as a motive to desert the service of his Maker, and worship impure spirits and dumb idols? It is evident, from the whole strain of the passage, that the hope held out to the creature, when first subjected to this *vanity*, was, that he should in due time be delivered from it. But did the devil or his agents, when first tempting man to idolatry, enforce the temptation, by informing him that he should be subjected to that vanity only for a time? Reasoning like this will not be found in the number of "Satan's devices." Besides, the same apostle, in this very epistle, assures us that mankind were subjected to idolatry and all its impure practices by themselves and not by another; "for the invisible things of God (says he) (a) from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they (the Gentiles) are without excuse; because, that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves wise, they became fools; and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things.—And as they *did not like to retain God in their knowledge*, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient."

It is impossible therefore that by the *vanity* to which the creature was made subject, *not willingly*; that by the *bondage of corruption* from which that creature is to be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God; or that by the *pain* under which the whole creation groaned, St Paul could mean the idol worship or impure practices of the heathen; because he had expressly said, in the beginning of the epistle, that to these things the heathen had *willingly* subjected themselves. Besides, the apostle represents, not the heathen world only and the unbelieving Jews, but also himself and the Christian converts at Rome—even the whole rational creation as "groaning within themselves in pain, and waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their bodies." Were St Paul and the Christian converts, who had the first fruits of the Spirit, groaning within themselves under the burden of idolatry, or wallowing in the impurities of its worship? If this was the vanity and corruption to which the whole creation is here said to have been made subject, why should the Christians of Rome be waiting with *earnest expectation* (*ἀπεδεχόμενοι*) for the redemption of the *body* as the means of being "delivered from it into the glorious liberty of the children of God." The seat of *idolatry* and of every other *moral* corruption—whether innate or acquired—is the mind rather than the body; and those who shall not be delivered from such corruptions before the resurrection of the dead, will have no cause to look forward with earnest expectation to the approach of that awful event.

This interpretation of the passage therefore, fraught as it is with contradictions and absurdities, must be rejected. It is likewise perfectly modern as well as contradictory; for all the ancient commentators of any eminence, as Whitby has completely proved (b), considered *death*, and the *dread* of death, as that *vanity*, *corruption*, and *pain*, under which the whole creation groaned, or had cause to groan, before life and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel of Christ.

That the precarious tenure of human life, and the certain prospect of death, are, in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, often called *vanity*, must be known to every man, who has read his Bible with however little attention. Thus, the Psalmist, meditating on the shortness of human life, and the certainty of death, says, "Behold, thou hast made my days as an hand-breadth, and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily, every man at his best state is altogether *vanity*;" and again, "Man is like to *vanity*, his days

(a) Rom. i. 20, &c.

(b) See his valuable notes on the passage.

pass away like a shadow." In perfect harmony with this sentiment is that of Solomon, *From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.* "vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, *vanity of vanities*; all is *vanity*.—One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth for ever." In all these passages (a) it is worthy of observation, that the same Greek word is, in the version of the LXX, employed to express what our translators render *vanity*, that is used for the same purpose, by the apostle in the verse under consideration. Nay, even Adam himself—then become mortal, called his second son *Abel*, which signifies literally such *vanity* as a *vapour*; so that the ancient interpretation of this verse receives at least as much countenance from the language of the Old Testament as the modern, whilst it receives much more from the sentiments of the heathen.

That the thinking part of the heathen world, whilst they were all idolaters by choice, groaned within themselves on the prospect of death, to which they had been subjected not willingly, we are assured by the testimony of Cicero, than whom no man was ever better acquainted with the doctrines of all the schools of philosophy. That illustrious Roman, though by no means free from great weaknesses, had certainly as little reason to dread the approach of death as any of his contemporaries, whose history has come down to us; and yet in some of his most serious compositions, he writes of death as an event of which "the prospect must embitter the whole life of man" *. He asks †—"What enjoyment there can be in life, when, day and night, we cannot but think how soon we are to die?" and exclaims ‡—"Who can be otherwise than miserable, dreading sorrow and death, of which the one is often present with us, and the other always impending!" Nay, when he is endeavouring to persuade his readers to *despise* death, one of his arguments is, that it will render them as insensible both to pain and to pleasure, as they were before they were born §; and surely he who reasoned thus must have considered human life as *vanity* indeed.

Nor could the prospect of the unbelieving Jews be much brighter than that of this Roman. The Sadducees denied the existence of any immaterial principle in man, as well as the resurrection of the dead; the Pharisees indeed admitted both, but the enjoyments of that paradise, which they had provided for the children of Abraham, appear to have been very gross (b); and even to earlier Jews of much better principles than either of these sects, the prospect of death, seen through the shadows of the law, was extremely dismal and gloomy. Of this we have complete proof in the conduct of Hezekiah, one of the most pious and upright of the Jewish monarchs, when he was desired by the prophet, in the name of the Lord, to prepare himself for immediate death. He turned himself, we are told, (c) to the wall, chattered, as he says, like a crane or a swallow, prayed earnestly for longer life; "for, said he, the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee; *they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.*" Neither St Paul nor any other real Christian, who had the first fruits of the Spirit, could think of death as it presented itself to the mind of Hezekiah among the Jews, and of Cicero among the Gentiles; but the sufferings to which, in that age, Christians were subjected for the faith, made it very natural for them "to wait with earnest expectation for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body."

The redemption of the body can mean nothing else than the resurrection of the body.

(a) Ps. xxxix. 11. cxliv. 4. Eccles. i. 2.

* *Mortis enim metu omnis quietæ vitæ status perturbatur. De fin. lib. i. cap. 15.*

† *Quæ enim potest in vita esse jucunditas, cum, dies et noctes, cogitandum sit, jam jamque esse moriendum? Tusc. Quest. lib. i. c. 7.*

‡ *Quis, enim potest, mortem aut dolorem metuens, quorum alterum sæpe adest, alterum semper impen-dit, esse non miser? Tusc. Quest. lib. 5. c. 6.*

§ *Natura sic se habet, ut, quomodo initium nobis rerum omnium ortus noster afferat, sic exitum mors; ut nihil pertinuit ad nos ante ortum, sic nihil post mortem pertinebit: in quo quid potest esse mali, cum mors nec ad vivos pertineat, nec ad mortuos? Alteri nulli sunt, alteras non attinget. Tusc. Quest. lib. i. cap. 38.*

(b) See St Mat. xxii. 23—34. and p. 261 of this Vol. Note †.

(c) Isaiah xxxviii. passim.

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&c. or 5442.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Ær. 33,
&c. or 31.

The redemption obscurely promised to Adam was from that death which, by his fall, he had brought not only on himself, but also on all his posterity; to that death Jews and Gentiles were unquestionably subjected, “not willingly” or *by themselves*, but “by another who had subjected them in hope; but, according to St Paul, if there be no resurrection of the dead,” then they who are “fallen asleep in Christ can have no hope; for they are perished (*ὁπώλλοντο*), are *lost*,” and become as if they had never been. The resurrection of the dead therefore is unquestionably the completion of that redemption which was promised to Adam from the consequences of his fall; and as such it is described in the plainest terms by St Paul (*a*). “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ’s at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the (Mediatorial) kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. *The last enemy that shall be destroyed, is death.* For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, who did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself (as *man*, and *Mediator* between God and man) be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God—the ever Blessed Trinity—may be all in all.”

That this redemption—the only redemption which in strictness of speech was promised to our first parents—will be universal is certain; for “as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all,” without exception, “be made alive.” Such is the express doctrine of St Paul; and it is likewise the doctrine of his Divine Master. “As the Father, said our Lord, (*b*) hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is *the Son of Man*,”—the son promised to our first parents. “Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which *all* that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” From which last words it is evident that multitudes, who have been actually redeemed from the consequences of Adam’s fall, will yet be found not meet to be “partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;” and in all probability such unworthy persons would have been found among the descendants of Adam, though the first covenant of life had never been broken. As this redemption comprehends all men—Heathens, Jews, Christians, and Mahometans, so has it likewise been wholly of *grace* and without *conditions*; for though “*death is the wages of sin*,” *eternal life is not the wages of righteousness*, but “*the free gift of God*, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (*c*) “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins,” (*d*) before we had done either good or evil.

Redemption therefore, in its original sense, as promised to the fallen parents of the human race, has been, or rather will be, universal and unconditional. The stupendous plan, into which even the angels desired to look, was formed by the Divine wisdom and goodness, and carried into complete effect without any co-operation of ours; “but not as the offence, so also is the *free gift*. For, if through the offence of (the) one, (the) many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by (the) grace, which is by (the) one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto (the) many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the *gift*; for the judgment was of one (offence) (*e*) to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto justification (*δικαίωμα*). For if by the offence of the one man, death reigned by (the) one; much more, they who receive (the) abundance of the grace, and of the gift of (the) righteousness—*τῆς δικαιοσύνης*

(*a*) 1 Cor. xv. 22—29.
(*d*) 1 John iv. 10.

(*b*) St John v. 26—30.
(*e*) See vol. i. of this Work, p. 86, &c.

(*c*) Rom. vi. 23.

—shall reign in life by the one Jesus Christ. Therefore, as by one offence judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so, by one righteousness—*δι' ἑνὸς δικαιοῦματος* (a), the free gift came upon all men to *justification of life*—*εἰς δικαιοσύνην ζωῆς* (b).” Through the whole of this passage our loss by the fall of our first father is contrasted with our gain by the cross of Christ; and as we were subjected to the consequences of Adam’s sin not willingly or by ourselves, so have we contributed, and can contribute, nothing to that *justification of life*, which hath come upon *all men* by the free gift of God; for as Christ was freely “delivered” by the compassionate goodness of God “for our offences, so was he raised again for our justification.” With respect to this redemption, and the bondage from which we are redeemed, we are therefore *justified*, i. e. treated as if we had never come under any condemnation—neither for our *faith* nor for our *works*, but by the free grace of God, who sent his Son into the world to take upon him our nature, and in that nature to die as a Lamb to take away the *sin* (τὴν ἁμαρτίαν) not *sins*—but that *sin*, of which the consequences have fallen on the whole world*.

From Matt. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

It is evident, likewise, from the contrast made by the apostle of our gain in Christ with what we had lost in Adam, that in his estimation we have gained more than we had lost; and that this is really the case will appear incontrovertible from the view which, in the course of this Work, hath been taken of the consequences of the fall compared with the effects of the atonement. The free gift, as immortality is here with great propriety called, is now conferred on all men in such a manner as renders it impossible to be again forfeited. It is not held under the Christian dispensation, as it was under the paradisaical, on the precarious tenure of any mere man’s obedience to any law, whether positive or moral, but is the “gift of God” once for all bestowed on the human race, “through Jesus Christ our Lord,” who having made atonement by his blood, or, as the apostle expresses it, “died unto sin once,” “is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that sleep. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive (c).”

This covenant therefore, if such it can with propriety be called, is wholly of grace, as indeed the first was likewise; but the terms of the second having been fulfilled, not by us, but by our Divine Redeemer, it can never, like the first, be violated; for “the free gift of immortality hath,” as the apostle says, “actually come upon all men unto

(a) Perhaps one *judicial act*. See Schleusner.

(b) Rom. v. 15—19.

* Bishop Bull, treating of *justification*, and comparing Scripture with Scripture to ascertain the import of the word in the New Testament, having quoted the 18th verse of the fifth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, says—“Apprimè notandum est, Apostolum versu præcedente ex professo celebrare valuisse τὴν περισσούτην τῆς χάριτος καὶ τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς δικαιοσύνης *exundantiam gratiæ et doni justitiæ*, sive justificationis per Christum; nempe, quod donum illud justificationis non consistit vel subsistit in sola liberatione a morte, quam peccato meriti sumus, sed ulterius progreditur, et nobis dat, ut ἐν ζωῇ βασιλευμεν—in *vita regnemus per Jesum Christum*.”

“Firmum quoque pro nostra sententia argumentum peti potest ab iis Scripturæ locis, ubi *hæredem fieri*—nempe regni cœlestis, et *justificari* pro eodem ponuntur, ut Rom. iv. 13, 14. Gal. iii. 18. coll. v. 21. Col. iii. 24. Istis vero addi possunt textus omnes, in quibus *Justificatio, vita, et Salus*, promiscuè usurpantur, Quæ enim alii ratio hujus promiscui usus as-

signari potest præter hanc, quod in justificatione jus ad salutem vitamque æternam nobis conferatur? Unicum locum adferam, nempe Gal. iii. 11. *Neminem autem per legem justificari apud Deum, manifestum est; quoniam Justus ex fide vivet. Ubi probat Apostolus justificari hominem non ex lege, sed ex fide, hoc testimonio, quod homo ex fide vivit. Argumentum autem Apostoli scopæ essent dissolutæ, nisi vera esset hypothesis nostra, nempe justificari, et jus ad vitam, nempe æternam habere ἰσοδυναμοῦντα esse.*” Bulli Opera, Examen Censuræ, pp. 13, 14. Ed. 1703. It is evident, therefore, that when St Paul says that “the free gift came upon all men to *justification of life*,” he means by the word *justification*, according to this most eminent Divine, the restoration to men of that title to immortality, which had been forfeited by the fall of Adam; and such must likewise be the meaning of the word, where it is said that Christ “was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.”

(c) Rom. vi. 9. 1 Cor. xv. 20.

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 &c. of 31.

justification of life;" so that with equal elegance and truth he adds, that "they who receive the abundance of the grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall *reign* in life" (being perfectly secure) "by the one Jesus Christ."

Of the tenure by which life and immortality were held under the first covenant or dispensation this could never have been said. Whether the immortality of the whole race was to depend for ever on Adam's continued obedience to the positive command on which life was suspended, or the immortality of each individual, supposing Adam to have had children in his state of innocence, was to depend on his own *personal* obedience to that command, are questions, which in this world can never be answered; but it is obvious, that on either supposition (and one or other of them must be true) the immortality of mankind at large would have been held by a tenure too precarious to give them a right to *reign* in life, either by the personal obedience of each individual, or by the obedience of their common ancestor.

In this point of view, therefore, the only point in which the two dispensations of eternal life ought to be compared, it is evident that the second is much more favourable to man than was the first. It is true that we must quit the present stage of our existence by passing through the valley and shadow of death, instead of being translated from earth into the celestial paradise, as were Enoch and Elias; as all virtuous and holy men would have been if the first covenant of life had not been violated; and as those shall be, who at our Lord's second coming to judgment shall be found alive: but this circumstance of the Christian dispensation probably contributes much to wean our affections from this world, and to render us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

If the great longevity of mankind before the flood contributed, as it certainly did, to the extreme corruption of that race; if, as appears to have been the case, the period of human life was repeatedly shortened after the flood, to give a check to the again growing corruption, it is not to be easily conceived to what excess of wickedness and depravity mankind might have degenerated, had they been translated from this world to another without tasting death at all*. They would undoubtedly have thought no more of such an exit, than men do now of undertaking a voyage to a strange and far distant country, from which they know that to the place of their nativity they are never to return. Besides all this, let it be remembered, that the Son of God condescended to submit in our nature to temporal death, in order to redeem us from death eternal; and surely it will not be thought hard, that we are, in this respect, placed on a level with him. His body indeed saw no corruption in the grave, because a dissolution of it could serve no purpose whatever; but with respect to our's the case *may* be very different. "It may be necessary for such disordered and corrupt bodies as we bear about us, to be totally dissolved, in order to eradicate those *traces* which may have been formed by irregular and inveterate *associations* and *habits*, and which could not perhaps have been

* "If after a long time spent idly in this world, each of us were sure of being lightly removed into some other region, we should, in all probability, be no more concerned about it than at taking a journey into some foreign country. Or could we at any time, without either pain, or the apprehension of any, quit our abode here, and convey ourselves into the realms above, how ready, on every slight occasion, would each of us be to dispatch himself or others thither! how rashly would men rush into their Maker's presence, however unqualified or unprepared to meet him!—Here man is produced, and formed to act a part upon the present stage; a short one indeed, but

such as may in general be sufficient to constitute a real character, and lay a just foundation for eternity. Then the scene closes in so severe and solemn a manner, as must, if any thing can possibly, *alarm* him, and excite some more than ordinary vigorous endeavours to prepare for his appearance in the next, which is of infinite consequence, and opens with a public trial; when all persons shall be gathered from all quarters of the world, and *stand together before the judgment seat of Christ*, at once to receive their doom for all things done in the body, at what distance of time soever." *Law's Considerations on the Theory of Religion*, part iii.

otherwise reversed, even on the most sincere repentance (a).” If something of this kind be necessary, as St Paul seems to teach (b), that our bodies, being changed from *natural to spiritual*, may be rendered more commodious habitations for the spirits of just men made perfect, the dissolution of the natural body must be considered as an essential part of the scheme of redemption; and it is reasonable to believe that the change to be effected on those who shall be alive at Christ’s coming to judgment, will amount to the same thing with temporal death, succeeded by an immediate resurrection.

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

The death, therefore, to which all men are subjected by the sin of Adam, when considered in connection with the resurrection of all at the end of the world, is very far from being an evil; and as the gift of eternal life is held by a much surer tenure under the Christian dispensation, than it was, or could have been, held under the paradisaical, it follows that, in this point of view, the second or Christian covenant of life possesses in fact all that superiority over the first or paradisaical covenant, which St Paul, on every occasion, attributes to it.

It hath been elsewhere observed (c), that mankind were originally, as they are now, placed on this earth as in a state of probation; and that the Scriptures afford no ground for the very general supposition, that, had Adam and Eve abstained from eating the forbidden fruit, both they and all their posterity would have, even in this world, been forever beyond the reach of moral evil. This is a groundless dream wholly inconsistent with a state of probation, which may be compared to a school or seminary, where youth are taught such knowledge and principles as are necessary to qualify them for moving in a higher sphere than that in which they were born. Such was the paradisaical state to Adam and Eve; such was the Mosaic law to the ancient Jews; and such is the Christian Church and Gospel to us Christians. Whosoever is placed in such a state is supposed to be far from the perfection to which he is intended ultimately to arrive, but at the same time to be capable of making daily advances towards it by the improvement of all his faculties. There is indeed but one Being incapable of improvement, because there is only one Being absolutely perfect; but every rational and free agent, who is not incapable of improvement, must, in a greater or less degree, be liable to error and to sin; for he who cannot err, is already perfect, and has nothing to acquire in a school or state of probation. Under the first covenant of life therefore, as well as under the second, mankind, had they lived to multiply in that state, must have been liable to violations of the moral law; though, for the reasons assigned elsewhere (d), they would probably have been much less liable to them, had our first parents continued longer under the immediate tuition of God.

The first covenant of life was soon broken by the parents of the human race, who were, in consequence, immediately turned out of the garden of Eden; and since they had rejected the instruction prepared for them in that paradise, they might thenceforth have been left entirely to themselves to regulate their conduct by their own judgment. There is indeed reason to believe, that if their merciful Creator had not still had a heavenly inheritance in reversion for them, they would, like the beasts that perish, have been actually left to themselves; and that by an equal Providence they would have been rendered happy or miserable, according to their virtue or vice in this world; when death would have been the end of them all—the righteous as well as the wicked. But being received into a new covenant of life, and the instituted worship by sacrifices being appointed to prefigure the means by which they were to be restored to that heavenly inheritance which had been forfeited by their first father, it appears that the all-gracious God, whom they had so grievously offended, though he saw it not fit to take them again under that constant and immediate tuition which they had despised in pa-

(a) *Law’s Considerations on the Theory of Religion*, part iii.

(c) *Appendix to Dissert. iii, book i.*

(d) *Vol. i. p. 101, &c.*

(b) 1 Cor. xv. 35—45.

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radise, yet did not leave them wholly to themselves, but revealed his will to the patriarchs of the different families from time to time, as they had occasion for such supernatural instruction, and were inclined to receive it. Sin, however, which had now entered into the world, spread like a contagious disease; the most monstrous idolatry was combined with almost universal corruption; and mankind became totally unfit for that incorruptible and undefiled inheritance, to which they had the Divine promise that they should in due time be restored through the mediation of one born of a woman. From this depravity it was necessary to reclaim them; for to such "sensual, earthly, devilish beings," a redemption from the death which they had incurred by the sin of Adam, could have been no blessing.

The principal object of this Work is to give an historical view of all the means that were from time to time employed by infinite wisdom and perfect goodness to accomplish so benevolent a purpose. Revelations, as hath been just observed, were occasionally given to the patriarchs both before and after the flood, some of them followed by the most tremendous judgments on the most guilty part of those to whom they were made; but they failed as well to preserve the comparatively innocent in the paths of duty, as to extricate the more guilty from the labyrinth of error and the mire of corruption, in which they had so deeply intangled themselves. Religion, guarded by the sanction of rewards and punishments, which were neither seen nor felt in this world, laid no hold of the minds of groveling idolaters, who, when they had reached the last stage of their depravity, had probably little faith in a future state. A religion therefore enforced by the moral sanction of rewards and punishments *immediately* dispensed in this world with inflexible justice, seems to have been the only expedient left for the reformation of mankind sunk in the abyss of sin and idolatry; and this expedient the wisdom and goodness of God adopted. It is obvious, however, that such a religion could not be made *universal*, so as to comprehend the whole human race living in a state which was intended to be merely preparatory to another, and which no man was to quit but by passing through the valley and shadow of death; for were piety and virtue uniformly rewarded, and profaneness and vice as uniformly punished in this world, it is not easy to be conceived by what means the eye of faith could be kept steadily fixed on another state beyond the grave. God therefore was graciously pleased to make choice of a single family, which advanced into a nation, might be placed under a theocratic government, and made the centre from which the principles of true religion were to be gradually diffused, as men should be able to receive them, over the face of the whole earth.

Such, as we have seen in the course of this work, was the ultimate purpose for which the children of Israel were separated from the rest of the world, and placed under a government, by the administration of which every *sin* was in this world punished as a *crime* against the laws of the state, and *idolatry* or *apostacy*, as high treason, which it really was, against their king as well as God. By these means the principles of what is called *natural religion* were as faithfully guarded in the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, as have been the practice of common honesty, and all the external duties of social life, in any other nation under heaven; whilst the history of the creation and fall of man; of the destruction of the world for its wickedness by the deluge; of the call of their illustrious ancestor Abraham, and the promise made to him, that in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed, were preserved, and read with reverence, in their most sacred books. In those books were likewise prescribed a ritual and form of worship admirably calculated to preserve them from the contagion of the surrounding idolatry, and at the same time to give them some general notion of the means, by which the consequences of the first transgression were to be removed, and all the promises, in the fulness of time, fulfilled, which had been made to their forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Their notions of these things appear indeed to have been at first very ob-

scure; but the veil was gradually removed by the prophets, as the people became more and more able to bear the splendour of the light within, which was very far from being the case with them at the period of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, or indeed for many generations afterwards.

The Mosaic law therefore is with great propriety styled by St Paul (a) the school-master of the Jews to bring them to Christ; and we have seen, in the history of that people, and of the nations with which they had the most considerable intercourse, how admirably it was calculated, not only to serve that purpose, but also to diffuse through the world the principles of true religion, as well as the expectation of some great prince to arise in Judea for the good of mankind—an expectation which actually prevailed in the East about the period of our Lord's advent. The dispensation therefore under which the descendants of Israel lived, is not to be considered as having been given for the sake of that people alone, but as an essential link of that great chain, which will be found to extend from the fall of man to the consummation of all things—as an important part of that vast scheme of revealed religion, which began when our first parents fell from their paradisaical state, and will continue till the final judgment, when Christ, as the Mediator, “shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is DEATH,” when the redemption of man will be completed. “And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

As the Jewish nation was selected and set apart from all other nations, to be the repository of Divine truth, and the instruments of converting the rest of the world, they are called the *elect* or *chosen* people of God (b); and so great was the change from Egyptian bondage and idolatry into that happy state, into which they had been called by the God of their fathers, that it is compared to a *new creation*, a *new birth*, and a *new life* (c); and they themselves are said to have been *saved*, *delivered*, *purchased*, and *redeemed* (d) by him. When they were settled in the land of Canaan, and their government completely formed, they became the *Kingdom of God*; because he was their *temporal Sovereign* (e), as well as the sole object of their religious adoration, and they his subjects. As the great and ultimate purpose for which they were established under that form of government, was not only that true religion might be preserved among themselves, but also that from them it might be gradually diffused through the whole world, they are called a *kingdom of priests*, and a *holy nation* (f); though it is plain to every reader of their history, that among them the priesthood was confined to one family, and that *personal* holiness was far from being at any time the attribute of every individual of the nation. As the other nations of the world, though equally with the descendants of Israel related to God, who was the Creator of them all, did not belong to this *peculiar* kingdom of God, and so were not his subjects in the same sense with the Jews, they are frequently described as *strangers* and *aliens*, and sometimes as being even *not a people*; (g) whilst, on account of their idolatries and corrupt morals, they are occasionally called the *enemies* of God. These *strangers*, *aliens*, and *enemies*, however, could, on certain conditions, be incorporated with the Israelites, and become in all respects as one born in the land, (h) entitled to every privilege of the Mosaic dispensation,

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19.
to the end.

(a) Gal. iii. 24. (b) Deut. iv. 37. vii. 6. x. 15. Psalm xxxiii. 12. cv. 43. cvi. 5.
Isaiah xli. 8, 9. xlv. 4. (c) Deut. xxxii. 18. Isa. xliii. 1. 7. 15. Ezek. xvi. 3. 6. Zech. x. 9,
(d) Exodus iii. 8. vi. 6. xiv. 30. xv. 16. Deuteronomy xxxiii. 29. Psalm lxxiv. 2. cvi. 21. Isaiah xliii. 3.
(e) Book v. chap. iii. of this Work; Dissertation C. (f) Exod. xix. 6. (g) Deut. xiv. 21.
xxxii. 21. Hosea i. 10. ii. 23. Psalm lxxviii. 66. Isaiah xlii. 13. lix. 18. Romans v. 10. ix. 25, 26.
(h) Exod. xii. 48, 49. Numb. ix. 14.

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&c. or 31.

and as much the *elect* of God and subjects of his peculiar kingdom, as those who by ordinary generation had descended in a direct line from either of the patriarchs Judah and Benjamin.

This elect people of God are frequently called the *congregation* or *church* of the Lord, (a) as well as his kingdom; and as such are repeatedly said to be *sanctified* (b) as a body, though as individuals they were a rebellious and backsliding people. When a proselyte from heathenism was by baptism and circumcision admitted into this holy church of the Jews, and had offered sacrifice, he was said to have been *born again* and become a *new creature*; insomuch that his former relation to *his father* and *mother* and *brothers* and *sisters*, nay, even to his *wife* herself, was considered as wholly *dissolved*, if those persons continued idolaters *.

This *elect* and *chosen* people, who had been called out of Egypt and its idolatries; this *congregation of the Lord*; this *kingdom* of Israel, of Judah, and of God, was the true and only *church* of God from the giving of the law to the rending of the vail of the temple at the crucifixion of our Lord. Its members enjoyed many advantages over all the other nations then in the world; for "to them were committed the oracles of God" to guide them to "the knowledge of the truth," and instruct them how "to obey it:" to them "appertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; their's were the fathers, and of them as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all God blessed forever (c)." But the ultimate purpose, for which all these privileges were conferred on the posterity of Israel, was that from them, as from a centre, the light of revelation might be diffused over the whole earth, so as to communicate to all mankind, as they should become able to receive it, the knowledge of the relation in which they stand to God; of the stupendous scheme, by which life and immortality, after being forfeited by their first parents, had been restored to the whole human race; and of those pure principles of religion, on which alone they could "work out their own salvation with fear and trembling," and thus become, through Divine grace, meet to be partakers "of the inheritance of the saints in light."

This ultimate end of the Mosaic dispensation was indeed but obscurely prefigured in the rites of the law, of which the immediate sanctions were temporal rewards and punishments; and the *rest* to which the great body of the church looked forward in earnest expectation, when wandering in the wilderness, was probably nothing more than full possession of the land of Canaan and great worldly prosperity. Similar expectations of worldly greatness, with a firm persuasion of the perpetual obligation of the law of Moses, prevailed among that blinded people till the final removal of their "place and nation," to use their own words; but from the very beginning *many* of them undoubtedly saw through the vail, to that future *rest* behind it, of which the land of Canaan was but a very faint type. By the additional light which the prophets in succession threw upon this obscure object, and by other circumstances which it would be of no use to state here, the hope of a future state, and of the resurrection of the dead, became at last almost national, though their ideas of the enjoyments of that state appear to have been very gross; whilst by some of them it was confined to their own nation alone. Even this progress in religious knowledge, small as to us it must appear, together with the

(a) Numb. xvi. 3. xxvii. 17. 1 Chron. xxviii. 8. Ps. lxxiv. 2. Acts vii. 38.

(b) Exod. xxxi. 13. Lev. xx. 8. xxi. 8. xxii. 9, 16, 32.

* Inter Gentem Judicam hoc traditum est, et communiter receptum; Quod Gentilis factus Proselytus, et servus manumissus, ecce est ut puer modo natus: nam pro cognatis consanguineis, quos habuit

dum erat Ethnicus aut servus, reputare non debet. Lightfoot, Quatuor Evangelist. Harm. p. iii. sect.

14. See likewise Hammond's and Whitby's Annotations on the various texts of the new Testament, in which mention is made of *regeneration*, and *being born again*.

(c) Rom. iii. 2. ix. 4, 5.

universal peace that prevailed in the world during the greater part of the reign of Augustus, constituted the fulness of time for the appearance of him, whose office it was to “abolish death and bring life and immortality” to *light* through the Gospel; to correct their gross notions of heavenly happiness; to “break down the middle wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles—making of both one people; to reconcile both to God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; to preach peace to them that were afar off, as well as to those that were nigh;” and to be “a light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as the glory of his people Israel.” (a)

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

The preaching of the Gospel however is not to be considered as a revelation entirely new. Our Lord and his apostles constantly appealed to the law and the prophets; and what they taught was merely the completion of that great plan for rendering man meet for the inheritance which had been recovered for him by the sacrifice of Christ on the cross; a plan which had commenced with the fall of our first parents, and was gradually unfolded through the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations; till “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins (*δι' ἑαυτοῦ καθαρισμόν ποιησάμενος τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν*) sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high,” (b) thus proving himself to be the seed of the woman promised to our first parents, and “the author and finisher of our faith.” (c)

He who had the power of death was now actually destroyed; and the kingdom of heaven, which had been shut against the whole human race by the fall of the first Adam, was again opened to all men by this triumph of the second over hell and the grave; but all were not meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. The natural man was not then, is not now, nor indeed ever will be of himself, able to receive the things of the Spirit of God, so as to become fit by his own attainments for the society of angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven. At his first formation, when he came pure from the hands of his Creator, he was not deemed fit for that society, but was placed in the terrestrial paradise as in a school of probation, where, under the immediate tuition of God, he might acquire the principles, dispositions, and habits necessary to enable him to enjoy the happiness for which he was ultimately intended—“to relish the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, but which it hath not entered into the heart of any mere man adequately to conceive.” If such tuition was necessary to our first parents in their state of innocence, how much more necessary had it become to their descendants, sunk for ages in ignorance, idolatry, and the most debasing vices? If the first pair were not, as we have seen they were not, able to guide themselves without the aid of Divine illumination, how much less able were their idolatrous descendants to recover themselves from the slavery of sin and Satan, under which they had groaned for five thousand years? And except the small territory of Judea, the whole earth was in this deplorable state. It was part of our Lord's office therefore to redeem mankind from sin as well as from death, to instruct them by his word, and to sanctify them by his Spirit, that they might become capable of reaping all the benefits which by his precious blood shedding he had obtained to them. All this he hath accomplished, or will ultimately accomplish, by means similar to those, by which the principles of natural religion, and some obscure expectation of a future and better dispensation were disseminated from Judea, through different neighbouring nations, as light is diffused from the sun as a centre.

Had our Redeemer left the Gospel to be preached by inspired individuals, acting all

(a) Eph. ii. 11—19. Luke ii. 32.

(b) Heb. i. 1—4.

(c) Ibid. xii. 2.

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&c. or 5442.
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&c. or 31.

independently of each other, we may infer from the little effect produced by the preaching of individual prophets in the patriarchal ages, both before and after the flood, that no such reformation as he intended to accomplish could ever have been produced in heathen nations. He therefore formed his disciples into an organized society or *Church*, which is in the New Testament called *the household or family of the faith* (τοὺς οἰκίους τῆς πίστεως), the *kingdom of God*, and of *heaven*; and he built that Church or kingdom on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, HE himself being the chief corner-stone. It was not a church entirely *new*, but the old church of God, of which the limits were extended from the small territory of Judea to the circumference of the whole world, and the rites, which were merely preparatory to his sacrifice of himself for the sins of mankind, of course abolished, as the fogs of the morning are dissipated by the rising of the sun. It was founded for the very same purpose with the Jewish church; but that purpose was more completely and clearly developed. The object of both churches was to diffuse the principles and enforce the practice of true religion throughout the world; but mankind had become, at least throughout the Roman empire, more capable, in the reign of Tiberius, of comprehending the spiritual and sublime truths of Christianity, than any people appears to have been at the period of the Israelites deliverance from the slavery of Egypt. Under every dispensation of religion, the *final* object of our Heavenly Father has been the same, though under different dispensations that object appears to have been promoted by different means. So true is it, that under both dispensations—the Christian as well as the Mosaic—"the church hath been the pillar and ground of the truth (*a*)," and that the Gospel is not likely to make progress among heathen nations, when preached by individuals, however zealous or however learned, who have separated themselves from that society of which "Christ is the Head, from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that, which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body to the edifying of itself in love (*b*)."

As the Jewish and Christian churches were both of Divine origin, and founded for the same purpose, they are denominated by the same or similar names, have the same privileges attributed to them in Scripture, and were in succession equally entrusted with the oracles of God. The members of both societies were, at their first foundation, *elected* from mankind at large, not for any particular merit of those who were chosen, but that when placed under proper government, each might, in its own order, be the repository of Divine truth, and the instrument of converting the world. As the Jews were first elected for this purpose, the Gospel was everywhere first preached to them; and had the whole nation embraced the truth as it is in Jesus, they alone would probably have continued to be called, what they once unquestionably were, the *elect* of God, as from them alone would have been diffused, through the whole world, the light of the glorious Gospel. From the believing Jews it was in fact diffused; for our Lord's apostles and evangelists, as well as himself according to the flesh, were all of that nation; but when the majority of the people, who were *originally chosen* to be the keepers of the word of God, "rejected it, and acted as if they had judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life, the apostles turned to the Gentiles," to whom their mission ultimately extended, as well as to "the lost sheep of the House of Israel."

As we have seen that God's ancient people the Jews were, as a body, called his *chosen* or *elect*; so is the whole body of the Christian church called *the elect*, because they were selected from the rest of mankind, and taken into *the kingdom of God*, to be there instructed in the knowledge, worship, and obedience necessary to fit them for that eternal life (*c*), which Christ hath brought to light by his Gospel, and which, by his death

(*a*) 1 Tim. iii. 15.
1 Peter i. 1, 2. ii. 9, 10. v. 13.

(*b*) Eph. iv. 15, 16.

(*c*) Rom. viii. 32—36. Eph. i. 4—13.

and resurrection, he obtained for all who should be qualified to enjoy it. That this election relates not to the final salvation of individuals, is evident from our Lord's having declared that he had chosen the twelve (τοὺς δώδεκα ἐξελέξατο), though he *knew one of them to be a devil* (a); from the apostles addressing by the title of *elect* whole bodies of men, of whom there could be little room for hope that every individual should be finally saved; from its being reasonable to suppose, that they, who were Jews, employed the word, in the sense in which it is used in the *Old Testament*, to the authority of which they constantly appealed; and from the unquestionable fact, that if they had employed it in any other sense, as honest men they would have explained their meaning.

From Matth. xx. 10 to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

The first step which the goodness of God took in the execution of his purpose of election with respect to the Gentile world, was, by the preaching of the apostles and evangelists, to rescue such of them as would listen to the truth, from the blindness, idolatry, and impurity of their heathen state, and to bring them to the light of the glorious Gospel, by incorporating them with the converted Jews, who then constituted the Church of Christ. As this was in itself as great a change as that which was made on a proselyte from heathenism to the Jewish religion under the Mosaic dispensation, it is expressed by words of the same import with those, which were employed in the Old Testament to express the deliverance of the Israelites from their oppression and idolatry in Egypt. Thus, the converted Gentiles are said to have been *delivered* (b) from the vices and lusts in which the world was involved; to have been *justified and saved* (c) when they embraced the Christian faith, and were admitted into the Christian Church; and to have been *purchased and redeemed* (d) by the blood of Christ, as well from all iniquity as from the dominion of death. The same expressions are repeatedly applied to the believing Jews; and as the Gospel was preached to call the minds of them from a vain reliance on the rites of the ceremonial law, and to invite the Gentiles from the corruptions of idolatry to all the honours and privileges of the people of God, both Jews and Gentiles are said to have been *called* (e), in the very same sense that the Israelites were called out of Egypt, and formed into a society under a theocratic government, though the latter call was to a much nobler inheritance than the former.

As God formed the believing Jews and Gentiles into one body or church, having freed the former from the law of ordinances—"a yoke, which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear," and brought the latter out of darkness and idolatry into a new state of existence, "into his marvellous light"—the "light of the glorious Gospel," he is said to have *created or made* (f) them; to have *quickened* (g) them, or given them *life*; to have *begotten or regenerated* (h) them; and they are represented as *new creatures* (i) who have put on the *new man*, which after God is *created* in righteousness and true holiness. Hence the members of the Christian Church are called his *children* who have received the spirit of *adoption*, whereby they cry, *Abba, Father* (k); his *household or family* (οἰκία) (l); the Church herself *his kingdom*, or the *kingdom of heaven* (m); and as the land of Canaan was, under the Mosaic dispensation, the immediate *inheritance* of God's family or household; under the Gospel, *heaven itself* is the inheritance promised to his *family* (n), the members of which are indeed warned to look for no other (o),

(a) John vi. 70.

(b) Gal. i. 4. Col. i. 13. Eph. iv. 8—25. 1 Peter ii. 9.

(c) Acts i. 47. 1 Cor. i. 18. vi. 11. vii. 18. x. 33. Eph. ii. 5—14. 1 Thess. ii. 16. 1 Tim. ii. 4. 2 Tim. i. 9.

(d) Acts xx. 28. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. vii. 22, 23. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. Rom. v. 9. (e) Rom. i. 6, 7. viii. 28. ix. 24. 1 Cor. i. 9. 24. Gal. i. 6. Eph. iv. 1. 1 Thess. ii. 12. 2 Tim. i. 9, 10. 1 Pet. i. 15.

(f) Eph. ii. 10, 15. iv. 24. Coloss. iii. 10, 11. (g) Rom. ii. 13. Eph. ii. 5.

(h) 1 Cor. iv. 15. Philem. x. James i. 18. 1 Pet. i. 3, 23. 1 John v. 1, 18.

(i) 2 Cor. v. 17. 1 Pet. ii. 2. (k) Rom. viii. 14—18. ix. 26.

(l) 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. Gal. iii. 26, &c. Eph. i. 5. 1 John iii. 1. (m) Eph. ii. 19. iii. 14, 15.

(n) St Mat. iii. 2. iv. 17. x. 7. Luke x. 9. xxi. 31. (o) Acts xx. 32. Col. i. 12. iii. 24.

(p) John xvi. 33. Acts xiv. 22.

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and are called *heirs* of the kingdom of heaven and of eternal life, and *joint heirs with Christ* (a).

The Christian Church being thus, as the Jewish Church was before her, the *family* or *household* or *kingdom* of God, the unconverted heathens are, by the inspired writers of the New Testament, described in the same terms as they are described by the writers of the Old, as *aliens* from the commonwealth of Israel, as *strangers* and *foreigners*, and even as *not a people* (b); whilst the unbelieving Jews, who had rejected the Messiah, and turned a deaf ear to the Gospel, by which alone their own dispensation could be completed, are called even *enemies* (c). Those aliens, however, and strangers and foreigners, as soon as they were endowed with faith in Christ, could be incorporated into his church, and thus become *fellow-citizens* with the *saints*, and members of the household of God; and those who were not a people, might by the same means become the *people of God* (d); whilst we are assured (e), that the time will come, when all Israel shall be grafted again into the tree, from which, for their unbelief, they are now as branches broken off; that their being received into the church shall be as life from the dead; and that all the nation of Israel shall be *saved* from the blindness in which they are now involved.

As no man, from whomsoever descended, was by his natural birth a member of the Jewish church, or entitled to the privileges of the Mosaic covenant, until he was admitted into it by the rites appointed for that purpose (f), the very same is the case with respect to the Christian church. No man is, by his natural birth, a member of the *household* or *family* or *kingdom* of Christ, nor can he be entitled to all the privileges of that family or kingdom, until he be admitted into it by the sacrament of baptism duly administered (g). In the first ages, when men and women of riper years were received into the church by baptism, whether from among the Jews or from among the Gentiles, their former sins were considered as *washed away* (h); they were themselves looked upon as persons *saved* (i), by being called into a state of salvation; and all, whether young or old, were, by baptism, said to be *regenerated* or *born again* (k), as the proselytes from idolatry were said, to be born again, by the Jews, and to have become *new creatures* (l). It appears indeed to me, that our Lord called the period at which he sojourned on earth the *era* of *regeneration* (m), when *old things*—the peculiarities of the Mosaic dispensation, and the impurities and vanities of heathenism—“had passed, or were passing, away, and all things become new.”

As both Jews and Gentiles appear to have, in the age of our Saviour, been shockingly immoral in their lives, the latter occasionally practising the impurest vices as duties of their religion, it is obvious, that till a thorough reformation should be wrought in them, they were utterly incapable of inheriting the kingdom of God in heaven. As soon however as they were made *heirs* of that kingdom on earth, by being regularly admitted into the church of Christ, they were said to have been *washed*, to have been *sanctified*, and to have been *justified* (n) in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. This was the language of the Jews when speaking of the admission of proselytes into their church, and must therefore have been familiar to those to whom it was addressed by the apostles, and intelligible to every ordinary capacity. As it was applied to whole bodies of men—to the church of Corinth in particular, in which we know that there were great irregularities, and, as appears from one of the texts referred to in the margin, one man at least, who is supposed to have “trodden under foot the Son of God, and to have counted the blood of the covenant, by which he had him-

(a) Titus iii. 7. James ii. 5. Rom. viii. 17. (b) Eph. ii. 12. 19. 1 Peter ii. 10.
(c) Rom. v. 10. xi. 28. (d) Ibid. (e) Rom. xi. *passim*. (f) Gen. xvii. 14.
Exod. xii. 48. (g) St Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. (h) Acts ii. 38. xxii. 16.
(i) 1 Peter iii. 21. (k) St John iii. 3—11. Titus iii. 3. 1 Pet. i. 22, 23. (l) 1 Cor. v. 17.
(m) St Matt. xix. 28. compared with 2 Cor. v. 17, 18. (n) 1 Cor. vi. 9—12. Titus iii. 3—8.
Heb. ii. 11. x. 29.

self been sanctified, an unholy thing," it is evident that this *washing, sanctifying, and justification*, relate not to the final salvation of individuals, but to that state of salvation to which men were called, when they were translated from heathen idolatry or Jewish superstition, into the church or kingdom of God, in which they had every necessary aid to enable them to "work out their own salvation with fear and trembling." All their sins committed in their unconverted state were believed to be forgiven, and they themselves to be sanctified and justified for the sake of him, among whose disciples they were enrolled, when they were born again by water and the Spirit at their baptism. Hence it is, that whole bodies, or particular churches of Christians, are styled *holy, holy brethren, a holy nation, a chosen and holy generation, a royal priesthood, and saints*, (a) for much the same reason that the Jewish church was spoken of in similar terms when contrasted with the rest of the world. The disciples of our Lord had, however, a higher title to these honourable designations than those of Moses, because they were all partakers, as the apostle expresses it, (b) of the *heavenly calling*, and all entitled to that grace of the Holy Ghost, which the author and finisher of our faith, immediately after his ascension into heaven, so plentifully shed abroad on the infant church, and which he had formerly promised should abide with the Church Universal for ever.

Such have been the means employed by infinite wisdom and perfect goodness, to recover mankind from the state of blindness and corruption into which they gradually degenerated when deprived of that heavenly tuition, which was rejected by their first parents when they fell from their original state of innocence and felicity. And from this view, wholly taken from the Holy Scriptures, of the origin and object of the Jewish and Christian churches, I think the latter of them at least may, with respect to spiritual advantages, be compared to that terrestrial paradise into which Adam and Eve were admitted, when the free gift of immortality was originally bestowed on them. By all Christians the introduction of our first parents into the garden of Eden, is allowed to have been one great step in their progress towards perfection; and by those who consider every person, place, or event, mentioned in the Old Testament as typical of some thing resembling it in the New, that garden has been always called a *type* of heaven. To the mode of criticism which is constantly in search of *types*, I am not partial; but as the happiness of heaven consists not so much in the glories of the place as in the disposition and employment of its inhabitants, I would rather call the garden of Eden one of the outer courts of heaven, because the place of the departed spirits of good men, which is surely one of those courts, was in the days of our Lord called by the same name of *paradise*(c).

But if the terrestrial paradise may be considered as having been one of the outer courts of heaven, so surely may the church of Christ. In the New Testament, that church is everywhere described as the commencement of that heavenly kingdom, into the full enjoyment of which the righteous are to be admitted at the end of this world. It affords to its members all the advantages for working out their own salvation with fear and trembling that were furnished to our first parents in the garden of Eden; and the certain prospect of eternal life is placed before them as the end of their labours. We of this age have not indeed, though our Lord's immediate disciples had, that oral instruction which our first parents enjoyed, nor the sacramental benefits, whatever they were, of the tree of life; but we have all the instruction, for which we could wish, respecting what we are to do and what to believe, in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which are the lively oracles of God; and the benefits of the tree of life are amply supplied to us in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper (d). By means of all this hea-

(a) Rom. i. 7. xii. 13. xv. 25, 26. xvi. 15. 1 Cor. 2. Acts ix. 32. 41. xxvi. 10. 2 Cor. i. 1. xiii. 13. Eph. i. 1. Phil. i. 1. Coloss. i. 2. iii. 12. 1 Thess. v. 27. 1 Pet. ii. 9. (b) Heb. iii. 1.

(c) St Luke xxiii. 43. (d) St John vi. 33. to the end. See Bishop Cleavers three sermons on this subject; Johnson's Commentary on the chapter in his *Unbloody Sacrifice*, &c. and Michaelis's Annotations on the Bible for the Unlearned.

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venly teaching, we may surely acquire, through the aid of that Divine Comforter, which according to our Lord's promise is to remain with the church for ever, those principles of love, devotion, and holiness, which our first parents were intended to acquire in the terrestrial paradise, and without which no one can be meet to be an inheritor with the saints in light, or indeed to see the Lord.

But notwithstanding all these advantages for working out our own salvation, Christians are sinners like other men; and "if they say—even the best of them—that they have no sin, they deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them." How are their *actual* sins to be forgiven? Did Christ offer his life as a sacrifice for *these* sins, as well as for *that* which brought death into the world, and exposed mankind to many temptations and dangers, from which they would probably have been exempted (*a*), had their first parents not fallen from their paradisaical state? The Scriptures of the New Testament certainly teach that he did; and in that fine passage already quoted from the epistle to the Romans, in which St Paul magnifies our gain in Christ over our loss in Adam, he says expressly, that "not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment was of *one* offence to condemnation; but the free gift is of *many* offences unto justification."

From these words it hath been very generally inferred, that under the first dispensation, or covenant of life, repentance would not have been sufficient, to restore to the favour of his offended God, any man, who had been guilty of a wilful transgression of the moral law; but that every such offender would have been subjected to the punishment due to his offences; and that in the room given for the moral effects of repentance, under the Christian dispensation, consists its greatest superiority over the paradisaical.

That mankind would have been liable to moral evil, had they lived to multiply under that dispensation, there can be hardly any doubt; but we know too little of the dispensation itself to pronounce with confidence how sinners would have been treated under it. Accordingly Bishop Warburton, although no man held in greater abhorrence the doctrine of the Socinians on this subject, maintains (*b*), in opposition to the common opinion, that in every state of probation in which mankind have been placed, sincere repentance and a return to his duty would have reconciled the sinner to a God, whose mercies are over all his works; and this he thinks implied in the very idea of a state of probation, in which moral lapses must have been foreseen. I agree with the learned and ingenious prelate, that the very idea of a state of probation, implies not the *possibility* only, but even the *probability* of many moral lapses of every creature placed in such a state; and likewise that true repentance and a return to duty, will, in most cases, so far reconcile the sinner to his offended God, as to induce him to remove the punishment which the sinner had justly incurred, and which HE, all-merciful as he is, had begun perhaps to inflict. Such we know were God's dealings with his chosen people the Jews, and such dealings with every improvable creature are unquestionably implied in the very notion of probation, which would otherwise serve no purpose whatever. But we are to remember, that under the first revealed dispensation of God to man, as well as under the last, (though not directly under the Mosaic) much more was implied in the reconciliation of sinners to their offended God than the mere remission of punishment. Under both these dispensations mankind were to be translated from earth to heaven—to a state of glory and happiness to them supernatural. Now, it doth not follow, because true repentance and a return to duty may, in a state of probation, reconcile the sinner to his offended God on earth, so as that he may be advanced gradually to all the perfection of which he is capable in his *natural* state, that such repentance must therefore, without any other atonement, procure for him a place among

(a) See vol. i. p. 100, &c.

(b) *Div. Leg.* Book ix.

angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven—a place to which, by nature, man hath no claim whatever, and which he cannot merit as wages, even by uniform obedience (a), much less, if possible, by mere repentance, however sincere. There are, probably in a state of probation, many moral agents, besides the descendants of Adam, all equally with them candidates for higher degrees of glory than those which they now possess; for any thing that we know to the contrary, the several parts of the intellectual and moral universe are as intimately related to each other, though the relations be different in kind, as the corporeal parts of it certainly are; and if all this be true, it may be absolutely necessary, and probably is absolutely necessary to the government of the whole, that something more than mere repentance be required of every moral agent as an atonement for wilful sin (b). But it doth not appear that under the first covenant of life any other atonement was provided for wilful sin, than such personal punishment of the offenders, as might serve for a warning to the whole intelligent and moral creation; and this purpose we are sure that mere *penitence*, however sincere, could not serve, because its sincerity could be known only to the *Searcher of hearts*. In this respect therefore mankind are much more graciously dealt with under the Christian dispensation, than probably they would have been under the paradisaical; for we are assured by the words of inspiration, that “if any man,” under the Gospel, “sin, we have an Advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ the Righteous, and that HE is the propitiation (ἱλασμός) for our sins”—evidently our *actual* sins, (τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν) “and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (c).”

From Matth. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

As a scheme of moral government, therefore, and in no other light ought it to be considered, the great doctrine of atonement by the death of Christ, for the sins of the whole world—actual as well as original—is certainly worthy of all acceptance; and in this point of view the second covenant of life is much more favourable to erring man, than the first, from all that we know of it, appears to have been. The object of punishment is either to produce the reformation of the criminal himself; to serve as a warning to those who have not yet offended; or to answer both these purposes at once. When the infliction of pains and penalties serves none of these purposes, it ceases to be just punishment, and becomes wanton cruelty or implacable revenge. If then a method can, in any case, be devised to reclaim the guilty, without inflicting on them the severity of the punishment which they may have justly incurred, and at the same time to exhibit to the comparatively innocent the enormity of guilt, and the dreadful punishment justly due to it, all the purposes of penal justice will be fully answered by adopting that method and pardoning the penitent criminals; and such a method certainly is atonement by the death of Christ for the sins of all who are truly penitent, and put their trust in the mercy of God through the intercession of him who died for them.

Sins unrepented of can never be forgiven, because they render him who is the slave of them incapable of the rewards which are laid up in heaven for “all who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality.” For it ought never to be forgotten, that our piety and virtues are not required, nor profaneness and vice prohibited, as if the former could be profitable or the latter injurious to HIM who created us, and by whom all things consist! “Is it any *pleasure* to the Almighty that we are righteous? or is it *gain* to him, that we make our ways perfect? Will he reprove us, for *fear* of us?” No, he was as essentially happy and perfect from all eternity as after he had created innumerable worlds; and the combined malice of men and devils could not shake the foundation of his throne: but he commands us to be pious, holy, and virtuous, and forbids us to be profane or vicious, because piety and virtue are es-

(a) St Luke xvi. 10.
ii. 1, 2. See *Whitby* on the text.

(b) St Luke xv. 7. Eph. i. 10. iii. 15. Col. i. 20.

(c) 1 John

A. M. 4037,
&c. or 5412.
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&c. or 31.

sential to the happiness of every moral creature, and profaneness and vice necessarily productive of misery; and when these commands are disobeyed, the sinner is punished to reclaim him if possible from the evil of his ways, or at any rate to check the progress of vicious contagion. Both these purposes are better served by the atonement made by Christ than they could have been by the punishment of the offenders. For the purpose of reformation, actual punishment is unnecessary to the humble and sincere penitent; for in him has already commenced without it, all the reformation of which a sinner is capable. To the rest of the intelligent creation, the sufferings of the only begotten and well-beloved Son of God unquestionably afford a more awful warning than any thing which could be inflicted on the sons of men; so that the very first motions of rebellious desires, should any such be excited in superior spirits, must be instantly checked, when they reflect on the atonement that was made for the sins of the human race, into the purposes of which we are assured, (a) that “even the angels desire to look,” and to look undoubtedly for their own improvement.

Such is the general doctrine of redemption as it appears to be taught in Holy Scripture. In human systems it is indeed sometimes exhibited under a very different form. It has been said, and by an author of very considerable learning, (b) that the texts which speak of Christ’s being “made sin for us,” of “his bearing our sins on his own body on the tree,” and of the “Lord’s laying on him the iniquity of us all,” imply, that his Divine Father hath “laid on him, or made to meet on him, not a single iniquity, but a whole mass and lump of sins collected together, and laid as a common burden upon him—even the sins of all the elect of God.”

This is the doctrine of sin by *imputation* †, of which, I hope, enough has been said elsewhere to prove the absurdity and impiety. Were it possible, in the nature of things, to transfer the guilt of one person to another, and to lay it upon him as a burden, it could not be done without violating those laws of equity, which are established in the Scriptures, and engraven in the human heart. But to make this transfer is not possible; and we might with as much propriety speak of lifting from a piece of cloth any particular colour, and exchanging it for the sound of a trumpet, as of lifting from the elect their sins and laying them on Christ in exchange for his righteousness transferred to them. Guilt, as I have had occasion repeatedly to observe, is seated in the mind, and no man can become a sinner but by an act of his own *will*. If Christ therefore *really* took upon him the sins of his people by *substitution*, *imputation*, or *any other means* supposed able to accomplish such a purpose, he must have deliberately formed a wish (I write it with horror!) to have *actually committed* all those sins; but such a wish, though it would make any one capable of forming it, inherently guilty, could not have cancelled deeds that were done before he was born, nor have made those innocent, who had really been sinners. A deed once done cannot be undone; a volition which has been formed and carried into effect cannot be annihilated.

(a) 1 Peter i. 12.

(b) Dr Gill in his Body of Divinity.

† It is maintained, I think, by all the Calvinists of the present day, and more particularly by those clergymen of the church of England, who arrogate to themselves exclusively the denomination of the *True Churchmen*. It is taught likewise in the Larger Catechism of the Westminster Assembly of Divines; but at present I do not recollect any thing in the Institutions of Calvin himself, which must *necessarily* be understood in so extravagant a sense. He says indeed (lib. ii. cap. xvi. § 5.), “*Hæc nostra absolutio est quod in caput filii Dei translatus est reatus, qui nos tenebat pœnæ obnoxios;*” and these words taken

by themselves, certainly look very like Dr Gill’s transference of the sins of the elect to Christ; but in connection with the context, they may be understood as meaning nothing more than that the sufferings, due to us as the punishment of our sins, were transferred to the Son of God incarnate, when he died on the cross. Accordingly, in the next section, he says, “*Filius Dei, omni vitio purissimus, iniquitatum tamenstrarum probrum ac ignominiam induit, ac sua vicissim puritate nos operuit;*” words which will certainly admit of a more rational meaning than the exchange of *righteousness* for *guilt* between Christ and the *elect*.

By sincere repentance, the habitual dispositions are indeed changed, and those, who have been sinners, become, through the Divine grace, objects of mercy; but no power can recall the days that are past, or make those actions, which have once been actually performed, to have been not performed. To remove guilt from the sinner, and lay it upon the innocent, may therefore safely be pronounced impossible even to Omnipotence, for it implies that a thing may be and not be at one and the same instant of time; and the doctrine which teaches that this removal was made from the elect to Christ is an imagination of yesterday, which as it receives no countenance from Scripture or the earliest writers of the Christian church, is contrary to the laws of human thought and the established constitution of things. It is even more palpably absurd than the views which are taken, in the same school, of *original sin*. Those who think—if any do think, that *guilt* may be propagated from father to son, have something like an argument to urge for the transmission of Adam's sin to his numberless posterity; for all the men and women, who, by ordinary generation, have been introduced into the world, have undoubtedly derived their nature with every one of its communicable qualities from the primeval pair. But Christ did not derive *his* nature from the *elect*, so that their guilt could, with that nature, be communicated to him; nor, as he was miraculously conceived by the Holy Ghost, can we attribute to him any degree of that *taint*, which many suppose, and may suppose without absurdity, to have been conveyed from Adam to all the other generations of men.

From Matt. xx. 10. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

Nothing more therefore can be meant by “Christ's being made sin for us,” and “bearing our sins in his own body on the tree,” or by God's “laying on him the iniquity of us all,” than that by his suffering we are freed from the punishment of our sins, and being redeemed from the power of the grave, are restored to a state of grace similar to that in which our first parents were placed in the terrestrial paradise, and constituted candidates, as they were, for glory and honour, and immortality in heaven. To render *them* fit for the enjoyment of a state of happiness so supernatural to them, God was graciously pleased to take them under his own immediate tuition, and to conduct them, as we have seen, both by oral instruction and by the inward influence of his Holy spirit, through this world to the next, so as to have enabled them, had they not forfeited their title to immortality, to acquire such principles, dispositions, and habits, as were necessary to qualify them for the society of angels and archangels and all the company of heaven; and he has been pleased to do the very same things for *us* as members of the Christian church. In the church, which is the ground and pillar of truth, (a) we have access to the Scriptures, which are abundantly sufficient to (b) “make us wise unto salvation;” and with the church we have our Divine Master's promise (c) “that the Holy Ghost the Comforter, whom he sent to his apostles, is to abide for ever—not with the society at large only, but with individuals also, in whom he is to dwell, whose *bodies* are therefore called by St Paul (d) *temples* of the *Holy Ghost*, and by whose *strength* it is that good Christians are enabled to “work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” (e)

If this be a fair view of the Christian scheme, many of those controversies which have long divided the family of Christ, appear to be little better than contentions about words, which accurate definitions and a small portion of candour might soon do away. All those are *called*, to whom the Gospel is preached by authority; and the whole Christian church is a *society elected* out of the world at large. Such is the very meaning of the word *ἐκκλησία*, which signifies any assembly collected together out of a large and mixed multitude by authority real or pretended (f); and as Abraham was *called* from

(a) 1 Tim. iii. 15.
(e) Philip. ii. 12, 13.

(b) 2. Tim. iii. 15.

(c) St John xiv. xv. xvi.

(f) See Schleusner and Parkhurst on the Word.

(d) 1 Cor. vi. 19.

A. M. 4037.
&c. or 5442,
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Jer. 33,
&c. or 31.

his kindred and country, and his descendants afterwards from Egyptian bondage, and formed into a society for the *promotion of religion*, that society was the *church* (ἐκκλησία) of God, consisting of the *elect*, or God's *chosen people*. After the purposes of the Jewish church were served, and the church of Christ raised on its foundation, all to whom Christ and his apostles preached the Gospel, were again *called* to a still purer religion; and such as listened to the call, and embraced the Gospel on the terms offered to them, were incorporated into a society (ἐκκλησία) for the promotion of that religion; which society is called the *church* of God and of Christ, and its members God's *elect* or *chosen people*. We have seen that whole societies, of which many of the members were wicked, are said in the New Testament to have been *called*, *elected*, or *chosen*, for the purpose of disseminating through the world religious truth; but those who were so called are expressly enjoined, (a) to "give diligence to make their calling and election sure, (for their own salvation) by adding to their faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity"; for if they do these things, they are assured that they shall never fall. In the Scriptures of the New Testament, I perceive no other *calling* and *election* than this; and when viewed without the commentaries of men, who labour to confound it with the doctrine of philosophical necessity, it is surely not difficult to be either understood or believed. The apostles were under the necessity of preaching to *some nations* before *others*, because they could not be each in different places at one and the same time; those to whom they first preached, were of course first called; such of those who were called, as embraced the truth, were *elected* into the church of Christ: and therefore God, to whom all things have been known from the beginning, is said to have chosen or elected those first fruits of the apostles' preaching "according to his eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." This election has no reference whatever to the final salvation of individuals, as is evident from St Paul's comparing it with the election of Jacob in preference to his elder brother Esau, which is now, I believe, admitted universally to have no relation to the personal merits or final salvation of the brothers, but only to the question—which of them was to have the honour of being the ancestor of the Messiah, which it was impossible that both could have.

The questions respecting the conditions of *justification*, which have so long agitated the church of Christ, may likewise, I think, be easily resolved on this view of redemption, if mankind would lay aside their predilection for favourite phrases, and take their notions of Christianity from the word of God. The word *justification* appears to be used by the writers of the New Testament in different senses; but it is not difficult to ascertain each of these senses, or to distinguish them from one another, if we pay attention to the immediate object of the writer in every passage in which the word occurs. In its original sense *justification* is a forensic term, and signifies the acquittal, by a competent court, of a person charged with the transgression of some law, and his restoration to all the privileges in society, of which that transgression, if proved, would have forever deprived him. In this sense of the word, an innocent person, when falsely accused and acquitted by human tribunals, is *justified* but not *pardoned*; whilst a real criminal, though he may be *pardoned*, cannot be *justified*. But that "there is not (in the scriptural sense of the word) a just man upon earth, who doth good and sinneth not," is made known to us by the most complete evidence possible—the joint dictates of our own consciences and of Divine Revelation; and therefore whosoever is pronounced just by the Judge of all the earth, must be so, only because, though not absolutely blameless, he has performed the conditions of the covenant of grace, which was procured by the death of Christ, and by which he shall be tried at the last day. If this be so, whoever shall

(a) 2 Peter i. 5—11.

be restored to all the privileges which he would have enjoyed in a state of innocence, will in the Gospel sense of the word be *justified*; and this, I believe, is implied wherever the word occurs in the New Testament; though it often signifies much more.

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

Though not *guilty*, in the proper sense of the word *guill*, of the sin of Adam and Eve, all mankind were, in consequence of that sin, subjected to death in the most absolute sense, and therefore deprived of the greatest privilege of the state, in which they would have been, had our first parents never fallen; but from death they have all been redeemed by Christ, "who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification," and by whom, the apostle assures us, (a) "the free gift came upon all men to *justification of life*—*εἰς δικαίωσιν ζωῆς*." That this justification means our restoration to the *life*, with all its privileges, which was forfeited by the fall of our first parents, is, as has been already shewn, rendered incontrovertible by the context; and in other places the same apostle uses the words *δικαίωσις* and *δικαίωμα* in the very same sense (b). But wherever they are used in this sense, the justification expressed by them must be the act of God proceeding through Christ from the Divine philanthropy, and performed without any co-operation of ours, either by our faith or by our obedience; for it is expressly said to have come upon all men—believers and unbelievers, righteous and wicked—on whom death came by the sin of Adam. Justification in this sense therefore is wholly of grace, and depends not, in the smallest degree, on the faith, or piety, or virtue of men; so that it is neither by faith nor by works that we are thus justified. But this is by no means the only sense in which the word *justification* is used in the New Testament.

We have seen that the whole nation of the Israelites, when they were redeemed from Egyptian slavery and idolatry, and all who from the heathen nations around them were incorporated with the commonwealth of Israel, were said to be *saved* by being admitted into the family or kingdom of God; and we have seen likewise that the same thing was said of all, whether Jews or Gentiles, who, embracing the faith of Christ on the preaching of the apostles, were regularly admitted into the church of Christ, because they were then placed in a state of salvation, made members of that body, of which Christ is the Head, "delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of the Son of God's love (c)." But as no man can be saved without being justified (I say not at present on what conditions), it follows, that whoever is in any sense *saved*, or in a state of salvation, must in the same sense be *justified*, or in a state of justification; and therefore all men are, in this sense of the word, *justified*, when they are regularly admitted by baptism into the church of Christ, or kingdom of heaven. Accordingly St Paul, in an epistle addressed to the whole church of God at Corinth, in which we know that there were many disorderly persons, and at least one notorious sinner, after reprimanding them for going to law before the heathen magistrates, whom he represents as fornicators, idolators, adulterers, and sinners of other denominations, who could not inherit the kingdom of God, adds, (d) "and such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are *justified*, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God." But there is no reason to suppose that every individual in the church of Corinth was *justified* in any other sense than as being incorporated into the church of God; and this justification was so far of grace, that it depended on no previous merit of their own. It is, however, admitted, I think by all parties, that no man could be admitted into the church of God, nor, of course, *justified* in this sense of the word, but on certain conditions; and the question in dispute among divines is, What were those conditions?

By one party it is said, that they were *repentance* and *faith*, and by another that *faith* was the *sole* condition. If these polemics would candidly explain each his own

(a) Rom. v. 18.
(d) 1 Cor. vi. 11.

(b) Rom. iv. v. vi. viii. Tit. iii. 7.

(c) Coloss. i. 14.

A. M. 4037,
&c. or 5413.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Æt. 33.
&c. or 31.

meaning, I think they would soon find that there is really no difference of opinion among them. The import of the Greek word *μετάνοια* *, which is generally employed in the New Testament to denote *repentance*, is a *change of mind*, a *change of purpose* and *belief*; but it is impossible that any man coming over from the Jews or Gentiles, and applying to be admitted into the Christian church, could sincerely profess to believe the Gospel, or to have faith in Christ, without a total change of sentiment and purpose, with respect to the religion, which he had forsaken or was about to forsake. Such a man could not but know that to believe and obey the Gospel was forever to renounce idolatry with all its impurities, and to rest his hope of salvation upon the interposition of Christ alone, and not on the practice of mere moral virtue; on the ceremonies of the Jewish law; or on his formerly supposed *election* as a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. The very profession of faith, therefore, implied, if sincere, all the repentance which appears to have been required of the first converts from Heathenism or Judaism to Christianity. When the Ethiopian eunuch, converted by the preaching of Philip the deacon, who undoubtedly had instructed him in the doctrine of redemption and the other essential articles of the Christian faith “said, (a) See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?” Philip replied, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.” Here no mention is made of repentance as a necessary condition of baptism. The man had probably lived a pious and a virtuous life, and had nothing on his conscience that could excite that part of repentance which is called *remorse*. He had indeed been in a state of ignorance and error, but that was occasioned by no wilful transgression of his own, with which his conscience could accuse him; and when he professed his faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, he solemnly renounced his former errors, and promised thenceforth to believe and obey the Gospel. In like manner, when Saul of Tarsus was miraculously converted from pharisaical zeal for Judaism, to faith in Christ, (b), no other condition whatever appears to have been required of him by Ananias at his baptism. Saul indeed had been a violent persecutor of the disciples; but he had been so upon honest though mistaken principles. The Mosaic law authorised, under the theocratic government, the punishment of all innovators in religion; Saul believed that law to be still obligatory on the whole nation of the Jews; as a conscientious Jew he was eager to enforce it; and as the preachers of the Gospel were certainly innovators, he supposed it his duty to persecute them;—“I verily thought with myself, says he (c), that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.” He thought erroneously, but he was not *wilfully* guilty of sin against his God; and therefore though in modesty he afterwards (d) calls himself the chief of sinners, we nowhere read of his being agonized with that remorse which follows the *wilful* commission of sin. He now saw the erroneousness of his former principles and renounced them, embracing in sincerity the truth as it is in Jesus; and in this faith was obviously implied all the repentance which, in his case, was requisite to his admission into the church or kingdom of God, or in other words to his *justification*.

The Jews indeed who were converted (e) by the preaching of St Peter, “were pricked at the heart when convinced that by wicked hands they had crucified and slain a man approved among them by God;” and when they asked Peter and the rest of the apostles what they should do, they were directed to “*repent* and be baptized every one of them in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins;” but we are to remember that Jesus himself had made no innovation in their worship, and was a most reli-

* Which is very different from that of λύπη, which expresses the *sorrow* or *contrition* which naturally precedes, in those who have been wilful sinners, the *repentance* or change of life expressed by μετάνοια. It is likewise different from the anxiety and remorse implied in the words μεταμέλομαι and μεταμέλεια, which

incited Judas to hang himself. See Parkhurst and Schleusner on all these words.

(a) Acts viii. 35—38.

(b) Ibid. ix. 1—21. xxii. 4—17.

(c) Ibid. xxvi. 9.

(d) 1 Tim. i. 15.

(e) Acts ii. 37, &c.

gious observer of their law. He had likewise been pronounced innocent even by the Roman Governor, profligate and abandoned as that governor was; and therefore when they called out—"His blood be on us and on our children," they involved themselves in the guilt of the most atrocious murder that ever was committed—guilt, which must have pricked with remorse the conscience of any man not totally destitute of all moral feelings. They are said indeed by St Peter (a) to have "done it in ignorance"—i. e. in ignorance of Jesus being the Messiah promised to their forefathers; but they could not be ignorant, that they had consented to the death of a man, against whom the chief priests and Pharisees had failed to bring proof of any kind of guilt even by suborning false witnesses, and whom the governor himself had pronounced to be absolutely guiltless. Yet even of those sinful wretches, no other repentance seems to have been required as a condition of baptism than such a change of religious principles as was implied in sincerely professing the Christian faith. "Repent (μετανοήσατε), says the apostle, and be baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ, every one of you, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost;—and with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward (σκολιᾶς) *perverse* or *corrupt* generation;"—forsake the traditions of the Pharisees, and their worldly interpretations of the prophecies of the Messiah, and embrace the truth as it is in Jesus. That all this is here implied in the sense of the word *repent*, and in the apostle's exhortations to save themselves from that *perverse generation*, seems evident from the fact, that if it be not, he appears to have baptized them without having required any profession of their faith at all, which cannot be supposed by any party of Christians.

It seems to me therefore that there is really no difference whatever in the principles of those sincere Christians, who have so long disturbed the peace of the church with controversies concerning the terms or conditions on which those of riper years were by the apostles first admitted into a state of salvation, or in the language of that age were *justified*. To whom was St Paul addressing himself when he said (b) that "God is the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus; that it is one God who shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith; and that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law?" It was to Romans of mature age, who had been either idolatrous heathens, or at most proselytes of the gate from a conviction of the falsehood of the religion of Rome, and of the truth of the law of Moses; and of those persons he expressly declares, that no other condition of justification, in this sense of the word, was required, but faith in Jesus, or a full admission of the truth of the Gospel. The reason is obvious and clearly stated by him; "For all, says he, (c) both Jews and Gentiles, have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being *justified freely by his grace*, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness—διὰ τὴν πάρεσιν τῶν προγεγενημένων ἁμαρτημάτων—for the remission of sins that are *past*, through the forbearance of God," who overlooked or disregarded (d) the sins committed in their former state of heathenism or Judaism.

As their heathen or Jewish *virtues* contributed nothing to their justification, or admission into the church or kingdom of God, so the *sins*, which they committed whilst they were heathens or Jews, operated not to their exclusion from that kingdom. No other repentance therefore was required of them as a condition of that justification of which we are now treating, than such a change of mind as is expressed by the word *μετάνοια*; and that is surely implied in their believing the Gospel, for they could not really embrace it, without forsaking all their former courses. It appears not to have been inquired of them whether they felt for their past sins that *godly sorrow* expressed

(a) Acts iii. 17, &c.
on the words πάρεσις and προγεγεννημέναι.

(b) Rom. iii. 21, &c.

(c) Ibid.

(d) See Schleusner and Parkhurst

A. M. 4037,
&c. or 5442.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Ær. 33,
&c. or 31.

by the words κατὰ Θεοῦ λύπη, which is required of sinful Christians as working repentance to salvation—μετάνειαν εἰς σωτηρίαν; for in the converted heathens and Jews, that repentance—μετάνεια—that *change of mind and life* which is the most important part of all repentance, had been wrought, not by sorrow for their past sins, but by the grace of God through the preaching of the apostles. It is perfectly clear that this justification is a thing quite different from our final salvation, or justification at the tribunal of Christ; for St Paul teaches expressly (a), that when we are, in this sense, “justified by the grace of God and the washing of regeneration,” we are only made “*heirs according to the hope of eternal life,*” and of that heritage, we shall see by and bye, that we may be disappointed by our own apostasy or disobedience.

The controversy about the conditions of this first justification, as it has been called *, keenly as it has been agitated, is of very little importance, except to those who are to preach the Gospel unto heathen or other unconverted nations. In Christian nations all men, except the Antipædobaptists and Quakers, are, in this sense, justified in their infancy, when they can neither perform, nor by themselves promise to perform, any conditions whatever; for all that can be understood, by the promise made by their godfathers and godmothers in their name, is, that they shall be carefully instructed in the doctrines and duties of the Gospel as soon as they shall be able to comprehend them. I think indeed that when a person of mature age, who was born and educated in a Christian country, is to be admitted by baptism into that state of salvation or justification of which we have been treating, greater care is necessary to inquire into the nature of his *repentance* of his *past sins*, than there is in the admission of a converted heathen into that state. No man in such circumstances can be so ignorant of his duty to God and his neighbour, as an unenlightened heathen; and therefore if such a man has fallen into gross sins against the law of nature, which in him must have been wilful, something more should be required as a condition of his admission by baptism into the church or kingdom of God, than a solemn profession of that faith which, when made by a converted heathen, implies all that repentance which is denoted by the word μετάνεια. He should be required to give evidence of the sincerity of his repentance by displaying some symptoms of that godly sorrow, from which such repentance ordinarily proceeds; but at the admission of infants to this state of salvation, of which they are surely as capable in the Christian church as they were in the Jewish, no other condition whatever can be required than a promise that they shall be properly taught or instructed as soon as they shall be able to learn.

I have said, that it is by baptism alone that infants as well as those of riper years can be admitted into the church, or justified; and such is certainly the doctrine of the church of England, and, as it appears to me, of Christ and his apostles. We have seen, that whosoever is in a state of salvation must likewise be justified; but all persons duly baptized, are by the church taught (b) to consider themselves as called to a state of *salvation*, as being made *members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors or heirs* of the kingdom of heaven; but whoever is in this state is certainly, in the language of all the reformers, *justified*. When the church says, (c) “that good works, which are the fruits of faith and follow after *justification*, albeit they cannot put away our sins, and endure

(a) Titus iii. 7.

* I am perfectly aware that the doctrine of a first and final justification has been disliked by many eminent divines, and by no less a man than Bishop Bull among them; but I think it impossible to deny that by the word *justification*, as well in the authorised version of the New Testament, as in the *Articles* and *Homilies* of the church of England, is meant sometimes the state into which we are admitted by baptism, and sometimes the acquittal of those who shall

be set on Christ's right hand at the day of judgment. It might have been well perhaps to have expressed things so different, by different terms; but in excuse for our reformers, let it be observed, that δικαίωσις and δικαιούνη are used in the same double sense in the New Testament, as any man may easily convince himself, by comparing together the different places in which these words occur.

(b) Catechism—three first questions with the answers.
(c) Article xiii.

the severity of God's judgment, are yet pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ," she can mean nothing else by *justification* than that state into which we are admitted by baptism; for whatever works we may perform in heaven after our *final* justification at the end of this world, will not be the fruits of faith, which we are assured will then be swallowed up in vision and enjoyment, because (a) "faith is the substance of things hoped for,"—not possessed, "the evidence of things not seen." The same church elsewhere (b) instructs us, that "our office is, not to pass the time of this present life unfruitfully and idly after that we are *baptized* or *justified*, not caring how few good works we do, to the glory of God, and the profit of our neighbours;" from which it is evident that she considers her members as *justified*, in the sense in which the only condition of justification is faith, at the very instant in which they are *baptized*. In perfect harmony with this, Cranmer teaches, (c) that the "way by which God hath determined, that man, *being of age*, and coming to *Christendom*, should be *justified*, is *baptism*."

From Matth. xx. 19. to the end, Mark xi. 15. to the end, Luke xix. 45. to the end, and John xii. 19. to the end.

The authority of Cranmer and even of the English church would indeed be nothing were it not supported by the Holy Scriptures; but by them, as we have already seen, it is amply supported. In a passage lately referred to, St Paul says expressly, that "after the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us"—ἐσωσεν ἡμᾶς—brought us into the Christian church or kingdom of God (d), "by the *washing of regeneration*, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being *justified* by his grace, we should be made *heirs* according to the hope of eternal life." Our Saviour himself says expressly (e), that "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;" which surely implies, that whosoever is born of water and of the Spirit does thereby enter into the kingdom of God, and is of course *justified*.

Baptism, however, is not in the Scripture anywhere, I believe, called *justification*, but very often *regeneration* (f);—and appears to be the only *regeneration* which was ever mentioned by the apostles and evangelists, or the earliest uninspired writers of the Christian church. The reason of its receiving this denomination was, that all who were converted from idolatry to the Mosaic law, were in the Jewish church viewed, as has been already shewn, in the light of new creatures; and the converts from heathenism and Judaism to the Christian faith being considered in the same light when incorporated into the Christian church, the ordinance of baptism was naturally called their *regeneration* or second birth, because by it they were born into a new state—the state of salvation or *justification*. To this regeneration the baptism by water is as essential a part as baptism by the Spirit; for we see (g) that the latter did not, in the case of Cornelius, supersede the necessity of the former; and therefore, though baptism by water will, in the case of the adult, signify nothing to his final justification at the last day, if it be not received by faith, the case is otherwise with respect to baptized infants, who, if they die before the commission of actual sin, shall unquestionably be saved at the day of judgment*. Even in the case of adults, men, who cannot discern the secrets of the heart, are in duty bound to judge charitably. God, who is faithful, will always

(a) Hebrews xi. 1.

(b) Homily on Salvation.

(c) Necessary Doctrine, &c.

(d) See Schleusner on the word σωζω.

(e) St John iii. 5.

(f) Ibid. 7. 1 Peter ii. 23. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Acts ii. 38. Titus iii. 5.

(g) Acts x.

* It appears to me indeed, that in some one of the many mansions of our heavenly Father's house, a

place of happiness must be provided for all infants, who die before the commission of actual sin; for what else is to become of them? If they are to be left in the state to which the fall of Adam reduced them, they must, as we have seen, be all annihilated; but if they are to be raised from the dead, as undoubtedly they are, it is not conceivable that they are to be doomed to hell-fire for a sin which they never committed, and of which hell-fire was not the penalty.

A. M. 4037. confer the benefits promised in his sacraments, unless prevented by want of faith in
 &c. or 5112. those who should receive them; and therefore all who were regularly baptized with
 Ann. Dom. water, were in the primitive church said to be *regenerated*, or born a-new †, because
 Vulg. Ær. 33, they were admitted into the visible church or kingdom of God, and therefore to be
 &c. or 31. looked on as *justified* persons, who had received the Spirit at the same time.

From this state of salvation or justification, however, a man may certainly fall; for every duly baptized infant is undoubtedly justified, though, alas many infants, after arriving at the age of manhood, have done despite to the Spirit of grace, by which they were at baptism “sealed (a) unto the day of (final) redemption,” or justification (b). The reason of this is very obvious; for the conditions on which we can continue in our state of justification, and be finally justified at the tribunal of Christ, are not exactly the same with those on which we were at first admitted into it. The sole condition required of those who from among the Jews and Gentiles were converted by the preaching of the apostles, and at the age of manhood admitted into the church, was, as we have seen, such faith in Christ, as necessarily implied in it that change of heart and purpose which is denoted by the word *μετάνοια*. The conditions on which those in riper years are in Christian countries admitted into it by baptism, are the same faith together with that repentance for such sins as they may have committed, which involves in it *contrition*, or that “godly sorrow, which worketh *repentance to salvation*—*μετάνοιαν εἰς σωτηρίαν*—not to be repented of. By infants no conditions whatever can be performed, and therefore none are personally required of them; but it is obvious that no man can continue to enjoy all the privileges of his first justification, who does not obey the laws of the Gospel, to which at his baptism either he promised himself, or a promise was made for him, that by God’s help he would be obedient. Faith and obedience therefore are the conditions, on which a Christian can continue in that state of salvation to which he was admitted by baptism, and by which alone he can be justified at the tribunal of Christ, before which “we must all appear, that every one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad;” for “God will render to every man according to his deeds,” and not according to his faith only; “to them, who by patient continuance in *well-doing*, seek for glory and honour, and immortality, eternal life; but to them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.” (c)

Our present state, however, as I have often repeated, is but a state of probation, in which we have a steady course to pursue, though we are liable to diviate from it both to the right hand and to the left. Perfection is not to be attained in this world, nor is it indeed expected from us; but it is expected that we shall make daily advances towards it, till we become meet to be inheritors of some one of the many mansions of our heavenly Father’s house, which is laid open to us by the death and resurrection of our Redeemer alone. To encourage us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, we are assured that the Comforter, even that Blessed Spirit whom our Lord sent from his Father on the apostles, “shall remain with the church for ever,” to enable every individual member, who in earnest endeavours to obey the Gospel, to “work and to do according to his good pleasure;” that to every Christian who devoutly asks his aid, that aid will be granted by our Heavenly Father more readily than any one of us gives good gifts to his children; that the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, dwelleth with the church, and is in every good Christian; and that it is by the influ-

† Hence St Augustin (tom. 9. p. 169.) says—
 “Simon ille Magus natus erat ex aqua et Spiritu,”
 though *probably* at the time of his baptism, and *certainly* soon after it, he was “in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity.”

(a) Eph. iii. 30. (b) See *Pool’s Synop-*
 sis on the verse, or *Hardy’s* addition of the Greek
 Testament. (c) 2 Cor. v. 10, Rom. ii. 6.—
 13. vi. viii. Gal. v. 16, &c.

ence of the Holy Ghost that we are renewed in the spirit of our minds, and “have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.” (a)

This last expression, with several others of the same import scattered through the writings of St Paul, appear to me to refer to those graces of the Holy Ghost, which, according to the unanimous opinion of the fathers of the church, were conferred on the first parents of the human race in paradise, and which were forfeited by their fall when they forfeited their title to eternal life, to prepare them for which those graces had been bestowed on them. In my opinion therefore, every text which speaks of the renewing of —ἀνακαίνωσις—the restoration of the Holy Ghost, gives a powerful support to that primitive doctrine, which is so much disliked by some moderns of name, for no other reason, that I can conceive, than that it was taught by many of the school divines. But the school divines were men of great acuteness, who taught many truths as well as many errors; and if this ancient doctrine be an error, it is surely a harmless one; for that Adam and Eve were immediately taught by God in some way internal, or external, or both, is as certain as that the book of Genesis was written by Divine inspiration. We likewise are taught by God externally in the Holy Scriptures, and internally by the Holy Ghost speaking in the still small voice to our minds, as well to enlighten our understanding as to purify our hearts. Even faith itself is “the gift of God;” for, as one of the greatest of our old Divines well observes, (b) “Christ is not only given unto us, in whom we may believe, but it is also given us on the behalf of Christ to believe on him; and this last gift is the gift of the Holy Ghost working an assent unto that which by the word is propounded to us. It was by this internal operation of the Holy Ghost that ‘the Lord opened (c) the heart of Lydia, so that she attended to the things which were spoken by Paul;’ and it is by the same operation that ‘the word preached profiteth, when it is mixed (d) with faith in them that hear it.’ But we are not only enlightened by the Spirit of God operating on our intellectual powers, but also directed by the same Spirit in our conduct; for we are assured, (e) that “as many, and only as many, as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God; that the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God; and that if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”

Every thing therefore which was lost by the fall of the first Adam has been more than restored to us through the second. We hold our title to eternal life by a much surer tenure; if by the commission of wilful sin we fall from that state of salvation into which we were admitted at our baptism, we may be restored to it in the same way that men of riper years are at first justified, by repentance and faith, which we are not sure that under the first covenant we could have been; and if even from that period, we seek, by patient continuance in well-doing, for glory and honour and immortality, we shall by the gracious terms of the Gospel covenant be finally justified at the tribunal of Christ, and “inherit the kingdom prepared for us from the beginning of the world.”

Through the whole of this discussion I have industriously avoided the mention of any kind of *instrument* of justification; for “we are justified freely by Divine grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood (f);” and, as Bishop Bull observes, (g) “Omnis causa instrumentalis, suo modo, in effectum influit, eique effecti productio propriè attribui potest. Jam, vero, cum justificatio nihil aliud sit quam gratus Dei actus, quo peccata nostra nobis condonet, ac nos ad salutem acceptet, valde absurdum esset dicere, vel fidem, vel

From Matth.
xx. 10. to the
end, Mark xi.
15. to the end,
Luke xix. 45.
to the end, and
John xii. 19. to
the end.

(a) St John xiv. 16, 17. Philippians ii. 12, 13. St Luke xi. 13. Ephesians iv. 23. Colossians iii. 10.
(b) Pearson on the Creed. (c) Acts xvi. 14. (d) Heb. iv. 2. (e) Rom. viii. 14, &c.
(f) Rom. iii. 24, 25. (g) Harm. Apost. Dissert. i. cap. ii. § 9.

A. M. 4037, opera nostra, vel quidvis aliud nostri, aut remittere peccata nostra, aut personas nostras
 &c. or 5442. acceptare : quod tamen, si instrumentalis causa justificationis fides sit, plane dicendum
 Ann. Dom. esset."
 Vulg. Ær. 33.
 &c. or 31.

But though I would not call *faith*, nor any thing else which could be predicated of men, an *instrument* or *instrumental cause* of our justification ; faith is evidently not only a condition, but when compared with our good works or repentance, a condition κατ' ἐξοχὴν of Christian justification. The reason is very obvious. The man who has heard the Gospel preached, who has read his Bible with attention, and who yet claims eternal life as inherent in the nature of his soul, or as the merited reward of his good works, renounces all the privileges of the Gospel covenant, and challenges the utmost rigour of Divine justice—of the justice of that Almighty Being, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with favour, and who chargeth even his angels with folly. Such a man is no Christian, though he may profess to believe that Jesus of Nazareth was a teacher sent from God, and even the Son of God incarnate. The greatest sinner, therefore, who retains his Christian faith, is not in so deplorable a state as this ; for he is still a Christian, a member of Christ's household, however unworthy, and has not fallen *wholly* from that state of salvation or justification, into which he was admitted at his baptism ; but the man who claims eternal life to himself, either as an inherent *right*, or as a *debt*, disdains to rest his salvation on the interposition of a Redeemer, and however moral his life may be, is in a much worse state than a virtuous heathen. In some of the various mansions of our Heavenly Father's house, places, I doubt not, are prepared for many virtuous heathens by a Saviour of whom they never heard, and in whom, of course, they could not actually believe ; but the mere moral or *rational* Christian (as such men very improperly call themselves) rejects every heavenly possession but such as he has *merited* of God by his services, and exposes himself to the fate—indeed challenges the fate of those citizens in the Gospel, (a) who “ sent a message after their sovereign, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.”]

(a) St Luke xix. 12—28.

CHAPTER V.

FROM THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST TO THE COMPLETION OF THE
CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, IN ALL ABOUT 64 YEARS.

THE HISTORY.

M. 4037, or 5444. n. Dom. g. Ær. 33, cc. or 31. **A**FTER that our Blessed Saviour was ascended out of sight, the apostles and other disciples still stood gazing up to heaven, until two angels, in the shape of men, and gloriously apparelled, came and informed them, that their Lord and Master, who was then departed into heaven, should, at the great day of judgment, in the same visible manner, come again from thence; whereupon they all returned to Jerusalem full of joy and consolation, and, being about an hundred and twenty in number (besides Mary the mother of our Lord, and some other pious women who had attended him in his ministry), they there spent their time in acts of religious worship, assembling daily in a certain upper room † which they had made choice of for that purpose.

From Acts. i. 10. to the end.

In one of these assemblies, St Peter, reminding them that the number of the apostles which our Lord had appointed was originally twelve, but that Judas, by his transgression, had forfeited that honour, thought proper to propose the choice of another person ‖ to succeed in his place; and especially such an one as had been familiarly conversant

† Some annotators are of opinion, that the upper room where the apostles and other believers so frequently met together, was one of the chambers of the temple, which not only served for the use of the priests, but stood constantly open likewise for any religious assemblies. It is granted, indeed, that in the temple there were several upper rooms, but then, that they belonged to any besides the priests and Levites, is an assertion destitute of proof; nor is it easy to conceive, how a company of poor fishermen and Galileans, who were odious to the priesthood for their Master's sake, should be permitted to come in such numbers as the Sacred History takes notice of, and to hold their assemblies, which were thought destructive to the established religion, within the verge of the temple. As therefore it was a thing very common among the Jews to have their oratories, or private chapels, on the tops of their houses, where they generally met to read the law, and to treat of any religious matters; so it is much more probable, that this was a room belonging to some private family that were

converts to the Christian faith, where, consequently, the apostles and other professors might meet to consult about the affairs of the church, and to pay their adorations to their Heavenly Master, without fear of molestation: And, if conjectures may be allowed in matters of such uncertainty, it is not improbable, that their customary place of meeting was at the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, because St Peter, upon his miraculous escape out of prison, is said to have gone directly thither, and there to have found several of his brethren gathered together, Acts xii. 12. *Echard's Ecclesiastical History, Whitby's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

‖ The words, according to our translation, are these,—“That he might take part of the ministry and apostleship, from which Judas, by transgression, fell, that he might go to his own place,” Acts i. 25. Here several commentators and divines make several reflections on the modesty and charity of St Luke, the author of the Acts of the apostles, in that he does not say that Judas was damned, but only that he went to

A. M. 4037,
&c. or 5144.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Ær. 33,
&c. or 31.

with our Saviour from first to last, that so he might be a competent witness both of his doctrines and miracles, his life and death, and especially his resurrection from the dead. To this the company readily assented; and having appointed Joseph, * surnamed Barsabas, and Matthias, one of the seventy disciples, for the two candidates, they solemnly implored the Divine direction in what they were going to do, and so, drawing lots, elected Matthias, upon whom the lot fell, into the number of the twelve apostles.

When the vacancy of the sacred college was thus filled up, the apostles and other disciples were all met together in their accustomed place, on the day of Pentecost †; when on a sudden a prodigious noise, much like the rushing of a loud impetuous wind, filled all the house where they were, and a kind of fiery vapour or exhalation, formed into the figure of a man's tongue, but divided a little at the tip, sat on the head of each of them; whereupon they were all immediately filled with the Holy Ghost, †² and, by its Divine inspiration, began to speak in several different languages.

At this time there were Jews of every quarter of the world sojourning in Jerusalem, besides proselytes, who from almost all nations came thither to the celebration of the feast; and no sooner did they hear of this miraculous event, but they began to wonder

his place, without pretending to determine the matter; whilst others imagine, that this expression denotes a particular place of damnation, appropriated to Judas because of the heinousness of his crime: But if we consider the original, we shall find, that the words do not relate to Judas, but Matthias. Judas, by his transgression, had forfeited his share in the ministry: another was to be chosen into it: this person, when so chosen, succeeds him in his *κλήρον*, his lot or portion of the ministry, and so is now to go to his *τόπον τὸν ἴδιον*, proper place or province. It is but then enclosing the words "from which Judas by transgression fell," within a parenthesis, and then they will have no relation to the following, "that he might go to his own place." For these belong entirely to Matthias, or the person that should be chosen into the apostleship, and plainly denote, that he should go and take possession of the place, or office, which Judas had forfeited, and not at all, that Judas should go to his place of punishment. *Hammond's Annotations*, and an *Essay towards a New Translation*. [See, however, *Whitby* on the place, who seems to have removed every objection which can be made to the common interpretation.]

* He was one of our Lord's first disciples, and is reckoned by the ancients among the number of the seventy. Some suppose that he was one of the brethren or relations of our Blessed Saviour, whom the Gospels make mention of; and Papias relates one particular in his life, viz. That having on a certain time drank poison, it had no effect on him, as our Saviour had promised those who should believe on him. However this might be, it is certain, that he continued in the apostolic ministry to the end, and, having suffered a great deal from the Jews, at last died in Judea, and there obtained a crown of martyrdom. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Fleury's Ecclesiastical History*.

† This word is derived from the Greek *πεντηκοστή*, which signifies the *fiftieth*, because the feast of Pentecost was celebrated the fiftieth day after the sixteenth of the month Nisan, which was the second day of the feast of the passover, Lev. xxiii. 15, 16.; and for the

same reason it is called the feast of weeks, because it was observed seven weeks after the passover, Deut. xvi. 9. It was at first instituted in order to oblige the Jews to repair to the temple of the Lord, there to acknowledge his dominion and sovereignty over all their labours, and there to render thanks to him for the law, which he gave them on the like day, viz. the fiftieth day after their departure out of Egypt. In like manner, the Christian church celebrates the feast of Pentecost fifty days, or seven weeks after the passover, or the resurrection of our Blessed Saviour, to put us in remembrance, that the gifts of the Spirit were then poured out in a plentiful manner, as the first fruits of our Saviour's ascension into heaven, and that the Gospel began to be published by the apostles on the same day that the ancient law was given to the Hebrews. *Calmet's Dictionary*, *Pool's* and *Beausobre's Annotations*.

†² It is a question much debated, whether the *all* here mentioned relates to the whole hundred and twenty, who are said to have been present at this time, Acts i. 15. or to the twelve apostles only: And, in some measure to solve this, we may observe, that when the apostles came to appoint the seven deacons, they ordered the assembly to "look out among them men full of the Holy Ghost," Acts vi. 3.; which plainly implies, that there were several persons among them remarkable for such extraordinary gifts, yet we cannot suppose any time so proper for their reception of these gifts as this wonderful day of Pentecost. Nay, if the apostles themselves, by the imposition of their hands, could communicate the Holy Ghost to those whom they ordained ministers in particular churches; it seems unreasonable to think, that such persons as had been constant companions of Christ and his apostles, and were to be the great preachers of the Gospel in several parts of the world, should not at this time be endowed with the like gifts. So that from hence we may, with St Chrysostom and others, be allowed to infer, that "the Holy Ghost fell, not only upon the apostles, but also upon the hundred and twenty that were in company with them." *Whitby's Annotations*.

not a little, how persons illiterate, and all born in the land of Galilee, should be able, ^{From Acts i.} with so much facility, to speak the languages of the several countries from whence they ^{10. to the end.} came; but others, who were willing to elude the force of the miracle, imputed their talking at this wild extravagant rate (as they called it) to the power and strength of new wine †.

Hereupon the apostles all stood up, and Peter, as president of the assembly, took upon him to confute this injurious calumny, by shewing the audience, "That then it was early in the morning, the third hour of the Jewish day †², and, consequently, no proper time to have eaten or drank any thing; that the present effusion of the Holy Ghost was a full completion of that famous prophecy in Joel (a), where God had expressly promised it; that Jesus of Nazareth was the person who had poured down these extraordinary gifts upon his church; that from the testimony of holy David it plainly appeared, that God all along intended to raise him from the dead, and exalt him to his right hand; and that the present mission of the Holy Ghost abundantly declared, that the same person whom they, by Divine permission, had crucified, God had ordained to be "both Lord and Christ."

This sermon, though the first that St Peter made in public, was so very moving to the audience, that it converted no less than three thousand souls ‖; who thereupon were received into the profession of the Christian faith by baptism; and, by their diligent attention to the apostles' doctrine afterwards, their constant attendance on public prayers, their frequent celebration of the Lord's supper, their cheerful intercourse with one another, their parting with their goods and possessions, and communicating to every one according to their necessities, (even to the love and admiration of all that beheld them), were daily and hourly confirmed therein.

Not long after this, as Peter and John, about †³ three o'clock in the afternoon, were

† As it was not, at this time the season for new wine, these scoffers may be supposed to mean no more than any strong agreeable liquor, whether natural or made by art. The ancients, we are told, had a secret how to make a wine which would preserve its sweetness all the year round, and which they generally used for a morning's draught.

—Quoniam vacuis committere venis,

Nil nisi lene decet, leni præcordia mulso

Prolueris melius.—

Hor. lib. ii. Sat. 4.

But it seems incredible, that any men in their senses should think, that either wine or any other liquor should enable the apostles to speak all languages, and to declare the wonderful works of God. It is well conjectured, therefore, by our learned Lightfoot, that they who said this were men of Judea, who, not understanding what the apostles spake in other languages, imagined that (as drunken men are wont to do) they babbled some foolish gibberish which they could make nothing of. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Beausobre's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†² About nine o'clock with us, which was the ordinary time for their morning sacrifice and prayer, before which they never used to eat or drink any thing. Nay, on their festival days it was customary with them not to eat or drink until the sixth hour, i. e. noon-time, that they might be more fit for and intent upon the service of the day: And from this custom the apostle draws an argument, which in those sober times was thought to be conclusive. *Pool's* Annotations.

(a) Joel ii. 21.

‖ A quick and plentiful harvest this! but it is highly probable, that as Peter preached to the Jews of Judea in the Syriac tongue, the other apostles spake at the same time, and to the same purpose, to the foreigners in their respective languages, while the late sufferings of our Lord, the present miracle of languages, the authority of the speakers, and above all, the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, contributed more than a little to this numerous conversion. The only question is, How such a multitude of converts could possibly be baptized in one day? To which some reply, that this rite of initiation into the Christian church was then performed by way of sprinkling, as it is among us; but whoever looks into history will find, that the form of baptism among the Jews was plunging the whole body under water, and that, in conformity to them, the primitive Christians did, and the Eastern church, even to this day, does administer that sacrament in this manner. There is no necessity, therefore, for us to suppose, that all these proselytes to the Christian faith were baptized in one day. St Luke delivers in the gross what might possibly be transacted at several times; for it seems indeed expedient, that these new converts should be a little better instructed in the principles of their religion, and the apostles more fully convinced of the sincerity of their change, before they finally admitted them into the number of the saints. *Echard's Ecclesiastical History*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

†³ Though, by the death of Jesus Christ, all sacrifices, and other things required in the ceremonial

A. M. 4037,
&c. or 5444.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Ær. 33,
&c. or 31.

going into the temple to pray, they saw a poor cripple, who was forty years old, and had been lame from his mother's womb, lying at the beautiful gate *, and begging an alms of those that went in. Silver and gold (as Peter told the man) he had none to give him, but, (what was much more valuable) in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, he intended to heal him; and no sooner was the words spoken than the cure was effected. His joints were made straight, and his nerves became strong, so that he went along with the apostles into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

Every one knew that this was the person who had been the lame beggar at the temple gate; and as he kept close by the two apostles, when the multitude, in much amazement, came flocking together to them in Solomon's porch †, St Peter took this occasion to inform them, "That it was by the efficacy of the name of Jesus, (whom they had crucified, but God had raised from the dead) and not by any power or holiness of their own, that this impotent man was made whole; that their crucifixion of Jesus was, in some measure, a sin of ignorance, but his rising again, and advancement to a celestial kingdom, a sure evidence of his being the promised Messiah; that the coming of such a Messiah, as well as the whole evangelical state, was all along foretold, not only by Moses, but by every prophet that succeeded him; and therefore, as they were the professed descendants of the prophets, and heirs of the covenant ratified with Abraham, God had made the first overtures of mercy to them, in hopes that they would receive the Gospel of his beloved Son, and repent of the iniquities which they had done unto him."

This was the purport of St Peter's speech; and such was its efficacy, that it converted no less than five thousand of its hearers. But as the apostles were thus busied in instructing the people, at the instigation of the †² priests and Sadducees, the captain

law, were utterly abolished, and a new covenant introduced; yet, for fear of offending the weak, and estranging them from his religion, our Blessed Lord permitted his disciples to frequent the assemblies of the Jews, and in some points to comply with the observances of the law, until a more pure and spiritual form of worship could conveniently be established. This is the reason why we find the apostles so frequently in the temple at the stated hours of prayer, of which the Jews had three. The 1st, at the third hour of the day, which answers to our ninth, at which time they offered their morning-sacrifice, Exodus xxix. 39. The 2d, at the sixth, i. e. our twelve of the clock, either before or after dinner, at which time we find Peter praying, Acts x. 9. And the 3d, at the ninth, or our three in the afternoon, when they offered their evening sacrifice, Acts x. 30. These stated hours, as the Rabbins tell us, they received from their three great patriarchs; that of the morning from Abraham; that of noon, from Isaac; and that of the evening-prayer, from Jacob. However this be, it is certain that the royal Psalmist makes mention of these three times, "at evening, and at morning, and at noon will I pray to thee," Psal. lv. 17. and of Daniel it is recorded, that he "kneeled down three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks," Dan. vi. 10. 13. *Calnet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*.

* Several of the gates (as Josephus tells us) were plated all over with gold and silver, posts, front, and all; but this, which he calls the Corinthian gate, because it was made of Corinthian brass, did far "surpass in glory those of gold and silver," being built with such art and sumptuousness, as well became the

frontispiece of that place where the Divine Majesty vouchsafed to dwell. *De Bello Jud.* lib. vi. c. 6. and *Whitby's Annotations*.

† Some are of opinion, that this porch, being one of those which Solomon built, had the fortune to escape (at least some part of it) when the Babylonians set fire to the temple, and that, though Herod the Great pulled it down, and rebuilt it in a more magnificent manner, it still retained its ancient name. It is certain, from Josephus, that the vast foundation of the east side of the court of the Gentiles, which Solomon built, was still subsisting in the time of the second temple; and as Herod, when he repaired that, made no alteration in this part of the work, the portico or cloister, which upon the old foundation was built round this court, might, in memory of so great a prince, and first founder of the temple, still be called by Solomon's name. *Joseph. Jewish History*, lib. xv. c. 14. and *Calnet's Commentary*.

†² These were three different kinds of men, and upon different accounts prejudiced against the apostles. The priests were offended, because the apostles, whom they looked upon only as private men, undertook publicly to teach and instruct the people. The Sadducees were displeased, because, in testifying that Christ was risen, and "become the first-fruits of them that slept," they effectually preached the resurrection of the dead; a doctrine which these men detested. And the captain, who was placed with a band of soldiers near the temple, in order to guard it, seeing such a croud of people gathered together about the apostles, began to be apprehensive of a tumult: but whether this captain was a Jew or a Roman, it is difficult to determine, unless we will

of the temple came suddenly upon them, seized them, and clapped them up in prison. The next morning the great Sanhedrim met; who, having summoned the apostles before them, demanded of them, By what power they had wrought that miracle upon the lame man, and who it was that gave them authority to preach to the people? To which Peter, without the least hesitation, boldly replied, "That their power and authority were both from Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had crucified, but God had raised from the dead, and thereby declared him to be the Saviour of the world." From Acts. 4. 10. to the end.

The miracle was indisputable. The man who had received the cure was standing by the apostles, and ready to attest the fact, and therefore the council had nothing to object against it; only, after they had ordered the apostles to withdraw, and consulted together what was proper to be done upon this occasion, they called them in again, and in hopes of awing them into silence, gave them strict charge, not to teach any more in the name of Jesus. But to this they made answer, "That since they had received a command from heaven, to declare to all nations what they had heard or seen, it was certainly their duty to * obey God rather than them."

This was a fair appeal to the consciences of their very judges; but their judges, instead of being satisfied with it, would probably have proceeded to greater violence, had not the people's veneration for the apostles put a restraint upon their malice: All that they dared to do therefore was, to repeat and enforce their menaces, and so dismiss them. When the apostles were come to their brethren, and had reported to them the treatment they had met with, they all joined in prayer to God for a supply of courage and assistance extraordinary, in that trying and perilous juncture; and, at the conclusion of their prayer, the house where they were was shaken with a mighty wind, as before on the day of Pentecost; whereupon they were instantly replenished with fresh measures of the Holy Ghost, and, notwithstanding all the threatenings of the Jewish rulers, found themselves invigorated to preach the Gospel of Christ with more boldness and resolution than ever.

The charity at this time among believers was very large and extensive. Such of them as had houses or possessions of any kind, sold them, and deposited the money in the hands of the apostles, by them to be distributed in due proportions, according to the necessities of their brethren. This a certain Levite, a native of Cyprus †, called

acquiesce in what our learned Lightfoot, with some others, seem to assert, viz. That the priests kept watch in three places of the temple, and the Levites in twenty-one; that to every one of these watches there was a chief, and to them all, one who was eminently the ἀρχηγός, the captain or ruler of the temple, and that this captain is the very same who, in Jewish writers, is so frequently called "the man of the mount:" whereupon he supposes, that this captain was an officer of the high priest's, appointed to bring those who any way offended in the temple (as the apostles were thought to do for having preached therein the doctrine of Christ) before the Sanhedrim, in order to be punished. *Calmet's Commentary, Pool's and Whitby's Annotations.*

* Whether or no this was an axiom commonly received among the Jewish Rabbins, and therefore very pertinently here applied by the apostles to their angry judges, this is certainly true, that Socrates answered his accusers in this manner, "O ye Athenians, I will obey God rather than you," *Apol. p. 23.* and that Arian delivers this as a general precept, when thy superiors command thee any thing, thou must remember that there is one above who sees thee,

"and that thou oughtest rather to please him than man." *Whitby's Annotations.*

† Cyprus is a famous island in the Mediterranean Sea, situate between Cilicia and Syria. It is reputed to be distant from the main land of Syria about an hundred miles, and about sixty miles from Cilicia, to be extended in length, from east to west, about two hundred miles, and in breadth sixty, and therefore to be one of the largest islands in the Mediterranean. The ancients were of opinion, that it took its name from the cypress-trees, which grow there in great abundance. They celebrate it much for its fertility, as being sufficiently provided with all things within itself, for which reason they call it the rich and happy island; but so infamous was it for luxury, and all kinds of debauchery, that it gave the name of Cyprus, or Cypria, to Venus, who was the chief goddess of it in the times of heathenism, when they used to consecrate their women to whoredom, and by a law compel them to lie with strangers, as did the Babylonians. *Calmet's Dictionary, Wells's Geography of the New Testament, and Whitby's Alphabetical Table.*

A. M. 4037,
&c. or 5441.
Ann. Dom.
Vulg. Æt. 33,
&c. or 31.

Joses, but by the apostles surnamed Barnabas, or "the son of consolation," did with great readiness and singleness of heart; and in imitation of him, Ananias and his wife Sapphira, pretending to devote all they had to the service of the church, sold their estate, but making a reserve of some of the money to themselves, they brought only part of it into the public fund, hoping thereby to impose upon the apostles. By the spirit of prophecy, Peter, however, perceiving their deceit, rebuked them severely for it, and by the miraculous power wherewith he was then invested, struck them both dead upon the spot; thereby to inject terror into the rest of the believers, and to prevent the like hypocrisy and dissimulation among them for the future.

Miracles of severity were not however much practised by the apostles: Acts of mercy were their proper province, and healing the diseased, and freeing the possessed, a great part of their employment; wherein the Divine power so far attended them, that even the shadow of Peter passing by cured the sick, who, in the very streets, were laid on beds and couches, on purpose to receive the benefit of his salutary influence. Nor were these marvellous cures confined to the inhabitants of Jerusalem only, but the people of several neighbouring towns and villages brought thither their sick, their lame, and possessed, who from the hands of the apostles never once missed of a cure.

Provoked at the fame of these cures, and at the success which they saw Christianity gained by the miracles and preachings of the apostles, the high priest, and some others of the Sanhedrim who were of the sect of the Sadducees, had them apprehended, and thrown into the common prison; but the next night an angel from heaven having set them at liberty, encouraged them to proceed with boldness in their ministry, and ordered them even to go the next morning and preach the doctrines of Christ in the midst of the temple; which accordingly they failed not to do.

In the morning the council being met, sent their officers to bring the apostles before them; but were not a little surprised when the officers returned and told them, that they found the doors of the prison shut indeed, and the keepers all upon their guard, but as for the persons whom they were sent for, there was not one of them to be found. This report put the whole court in great perplexity, until word was brought them, that the prisoners, whom they wanted, were preaching in the temple; whereupon the captain of the guard, with some other officers, went and intreated them to come before the council, not daring to offer any violence to them, for fear of being stoned by the people.

When the apostles were brought before their judges, and the high priest demanded of them how they durst presume to preach a doctrine which so lately had been interdicted them, they returned much the same answer that they had done once before, viz. "That they were bound to obey God rather than man; that Jesus, whom they had murdered, was undoubtedly the true Messiah; and that of his resurrection and ascension into heaven, both they and the Holy Ghost (whereby they acted) were authentic witnesses." Which so exasperated the high priest and some other of the rulers, that, upon their ordering them to withdraw, their first resolution was to have put them to death; but this was prevented by the wise advice of a certain Pharisee, named Gamaliel †, who, from some examples in former history, represented to the court,

† This was the Gamaliel at whose feet St Paul was brought up, Acts xxii. 3. and some of the ancients are of opinion, that he was tutor likewise to two other disciples, Barnabas and Stephen; and for this reason it is reported of him, that when that proto-martyr suffered, he encouraged the Christians to go by night and carry off his body; for which purpose he lent them his chariot, and allowed them a burying place in his own estate, about eight leagues distant from

Jerusalem. He certainly was a doctor of great repute among the Jews, and was therefore usually called Rabban Gamaliel, a title of the highest eminence, and never given, say they, to any more than seven. He is supposed to have been the grandson of Hillel, and either uncle or cousin to Nicodemus, of whom we read in the Gospel, John iii. 1, &c.; for thirty-two years to have continued the Nasi, or President of the Sanhedrim, and to have died about ten years after

"That if the apostles were no better than impostors, their fraud and fallacy would quickly be discovered; but that if they acted by a proper authority from God, it would badly become the wisdom of that assembly to contend with the Almighty, in persecuting his servants." And by this speech he so far diverted the indignation of the council, as to have the sentence (at first designed against the apostles' lives) changed into a corporal punishment. The court accordingly having ordered them to be scourged, and charged them very strictly "never to teach any more in the name of Jesus," dismissed them; and the apostles went away greatly rejoicing, not so much that they had escaped death, as that they were accounted worthy to suffer shame and punishment for the name of their dearest Lord and Master.

From Acts. i.
10. to the end.

The great increase of believers, and access of money to the common fund for the relief of their poor, made the institution of another order of men in the Christian church highly necessary. For when the Hellenists † complained that in the distribution of the charity-money, an undue preference was given to the Hebrew widows, whilst theirs were too frequently neglected; the apostles, who had matters of greater importance upon their hands, and were not at leisure to attend on this affair themselves, called the church together, and having ordered them to single out seven || men of great

the destruction of Jerusalem. Christian authors make no doubt but that he embraced the faith of Jesus, but at what time he became a convert, or by whose hands he was baptized, they no where tell us. To reconcile his conversion however with what the Jewish writers relate of his being at the head of the Sanhedrim so long, they affirm that he was a Christian even when that assembly sat upon the apostles, and that the apostles persuaded him to continue in it, and not to discover his religion, that thereby he might be capable of doing more service to the church. But the author of the Acts has noted the true reason of his speaking in favour of the apostles, viz. that as the Sadducees, after our Lord's resurrection, became the apostles' greatest enemies, because they "preached through Christ the resurrection of the dead," Acts iv. 2. so Gamaliel, who was a Pharisee, and consequently a stiff asserter of the resurrection, did therefore give his advice for the dismissal of the apostles, even as we find the Pharisees afterwards, almost in the same words, pleading for St Paul preaching the same doctrine, viz. that they ought not to molest him in what he did, "lest they should be found fighters against God," Acts xxiii. 9. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*.

† Some are of opinion that these Hellenists or Grecians (as our translations render them) were originally Gentiles, first converted to the Jewish, and afterwards to the Christian Religion, even as the Hebrews, here mentioned, were originally Jews: But though it be allowed that Gentiles of all nations are frequently called Hellenists, yet it no where appears that they are styled Hellenists; and that these Grecians must mean something different from the common Hellenists or Greeks, is evident from the case of St Paul, who when he came to Jerusalem and disputed *πρὸς τοὺς Ἑλληνιστάς*, "against the Grecians that went about to kill him," Acts ix. 29. whereas had they been strangers of other nations, they durst not have attempted to kill a Jew, among a nation of Jews, without bringing him to their tribunal. It is reason-

able therefore to believe, that these Hellenists were originally Jews, and descended from such, as in the several calamities that befel the Jewish state, were either forced, or chose to leave their own country, and settling at Alexandria and other places where the Greek tongue only was spoke, in process of time came to forget their own, and to make use of the Greek only, both in their common conversation and religious offices. Of this kind of Jews, we are told there were great numbers in Jerusalem, where there was a synagogue particularly appointed for such as understood no other language than Greek, and where the version of the LXX was constantly read in their assemblies. As therefore the apostles had hitherto made no tender of the Gospel to the Gentiles, the Hellenists here spoken of must necessarily mean such Jews converted to the Christian religion as had disused the Hebrew or Syriac, and spake the Greek language only. *Calmet's Commentary*, *Whitby's* and *Pool's Annotations*.

|| The words in the text are these,—"Wherefore, brethren, look you out among you seven men, of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business," Acts vi. 3. And indeed in the whole relation of this matter, there is nothing that favours the authority of the laity in choosing persons to sacred offices; for though the choice of these seven was committed to them, yet was this done by the particular appointment of the apostles themselves, who specified the number and qualifications of the persons to be thus chosen, and who reserved to themselves their designation to this office by the imposition of their hands, Acts vi. 6. And yet this part of the text in many or most of our English Bibles is very erroneously rendered: For, from the year of our Lord 1638 to the year 1660, and in several since, it is printed "whom ye may appoint," &c. thereby devolving the power of ordination into the hands of the laity. The Bibles printed with this fault are these.—That in 8vo, by John Field, 1660. In 24mo, by the assigns of John Bill and Christopher Barker, 1674. In 8vo, by John Bill and Christopher

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&c. or 5445.
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34, &c. ¶

repute for their wisdom and prudence, as well as spiritual endowments, to be chosen stewards of the public stock; these they ordained to the office of deacons, by the solemnity of prayers and the imposition of their hands. † The names of the persons who were ordained to this office were Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas, all taken out of the number of the seventy disciples, whom our Lord had chosen; but of these the most eminent for the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit was Stephen.

He preached the Gospel with a noble courage and resolution, and confirmed it with many public and unquestionable miracles among the people, insomuch, that by his means the Christian religion gained ground abundantly. Converts came in apace; and great numbers of the priests themselves laid aside their prejudices, and embraced the Gospel. This zeal and success of his, however, soon awakened the malice of his adversaries to procure some members †² of the most learned synagogues, then in Je-

Barker, 1674. In 8vo, at Edinburgh, by Andrew Anderson and Partners, 1673 and 1675. In 8vo, by John Bill, Thomas Newcomb, and Henry Hills, 1679. In 8vo, by John Bill, Thomas Newcomb, and Henry Hills, 1680. In 8vo, by the assigns of John Bill and Thomas Newcomb, 1685. At Amsterdam, in folio, 1679. And in Baxter's Paraphrase, and several others, the Greek word *καταστήσωμεν* "we may appoint," is rendered "ye may appoint." Whether this was by mistake or design, it may certainly be of dangerous consequence, as liable to deceive those who, though not unskilful in the Greek, may, through haste and inadvertency, depend upon the translation. [That it was by design can hardly be doubted, when we call to mind the principles of those who had the supreme power in church and state during the period from 1638 to 1660, when these editions of the English Bible were published; and when it is known that among all the Greek manuscripts that were collated by Griesbach, there appears not to be one which reads *καταστήτην*. Some indeed have *καταστήσωμεν*, and others *καταστήσειν*, to which that celebrated critic gives the preference; but not one of them has the verb in the second person.] *Whitby's* Annotations, and *Howell's* History, in the Notes.

¶ [Dr Hales places the martyrdom of St Stephen in the same year with the Bible chronology, and assigns very sufficient reasons for supposing that three years elapsed from our Lord's ascension to that event. As from the year 34, therefore, he differs very little, if at all, from the vulgar chronology of the Bible, it is needless, from this period, to note his dates from the commencement of the Christian era.]

† The names of these seven deacons, we may observe, are all of Greek extract; from whence we may infer, that, very probably, they were all Hellenists, and that consequently, by their designation, the church was desirous to give full satisfaction to the complaint of those whose widows had been before neglected. Of the two first of these, viz. Stephen and Philip, the Sacred History has given us a sufficient account, but of the rest we have nothing certain, except we will admit of what the Latins tell us of Prochorus, viz. that on the 9th of August he suffered martyrdom at Antioch, after having made himself famous for his miracles: Of Nicanor, that on the 10th

of January he suffered in the isle of Cyprus, after having given great demonstrations of his faith and virtue: Of Timon, that on the 19th of April he was first thrown into the fire, and when he had miraculously escaped from thence, was fixed upon a cross at Corinth: Of Parmenas, that on the 23d of January he suffered at Philippi, in Macedonia: And of Nicholas, that, either by design or indiscretion, he gave rise to the infamous sect of Nicholaitans, and therefore no Christian church has ever yet paid any honour to his memory. One thing we may observe in this place, viz. that much about the time of the institution of these deacons, James the Less (so called to distinguish him from the other James, who was the son of Zebedee), and for his eminent virtues surnamed the Just, was chosen bishop of Jerusalem, and for this reason preferred before all the rest, because he was a near relation, viz. a cousin-german to our Blessed Saviour. *Calmet's* Commentary and Dictionary, and *Fleury's* Ecclesiastical History.

†² As there were people of all nations, proselytes to the Jewish religion, dwelling at Jerusalem, it is reasonable to conceive that they had synagogues or places appointed for prayer, for hearing the law, and pious exhortations in their own languages. The Jews report that there were no less than four hundred and eighty of these in Jerusalem, which were so many inferior churches, and subordinate to the temple as their cathedral. These synagogues, very probably, were built and maintained by the several nations, or degrees of people, that resorted to them, and from these they had their names, as the synagogue of Libertines, i. e. of such as were denizens of Rome, of the Cyrenians, the Alexandrians, &c. But it is to be observed of these synagogues, that they were not only places of religious worship, but a sort of colleges, or schools likewise, where persons were instituted in the law and traditions of the Jews. The Jews at this time were dispersed in several foreign parts, and from these they sent their youth to Jerusalem to be educated in the synagogue or college peculiar to their respective countries. St Paul was of the province of Cilicia, and as it is reasonable to think that he studied in a college, either belonging to the country where he was born, or proper to his quality as a freeman of Rome, there seems to be no incongruity

rusalem, to dispute with him; but when they found their disputants baffled, and unable to withstand the force of those arguments which the Divine wisdom inspired him with, they betook themselves to vile practices; and, having procured men of profligate consciences to accuse him of blasphemy, caused him to be apprehended, and, in a tumultuous manner, brought him before the Sanhedrim, in order to obtain a formal sentence of condemnation against him.

From Acts. i.
10 to the end.

Whilst he stood before the council, the judges, and all the people then present, beheld a lustre and radiancy in his countenance, not unlike the appearance of an angel: and when he was indulged the liberty of speech, in a grave and severe oration, he endeavoured, not only to vindicate himself from the imputation of blasphemy, but, at the same time, by an historical deduction of the most memorable actions and events that had happened in the Jewish nation, from the time of Abraham to that of Solomon, he undertook to shew, "That religion was not confined to the holy land, or the temple service; that the law, for which they expressed so vehement a zeal, was unable to contain mankind within the bounds of their duty; that as their forefathers were all along a stubborn and rebellious people, and grievous persecutors of the prophets, who were sent to foretel the coming of the Messiah, so were they likewise a wicked and perverse generation, who in all things had equalled, but in this surpassed, the impiety of their ancestors, viz. that, contrary to that law which had been delivered to them by the ministry of angels, they had betrayed and murdered that very person who was sent into the world to fulfil it."

These last words, which were but too true, incensed the Jews to such a degree, that they fell upon him with the utmost expressions of their rage and fury, whilst he, regardless of what they were about, had his mind employed in the † delightful prospect of heaven, and the sensible appearance of the Blessed Jesus, in our glorified nature, standing at the right-hand of God; which, when he had declared to all the company, the Jews were so enraged, that, raising a loud clamour, and stopping their ears against all cries for mercy, they unanimously rushed upon him, dragged him out of the city, and there stoned him to death: whilst he, having first devoutly †² recommended his soul to God, upon his bended knees, made loud intercession for his murderers, that the sin they were then committing might not be laid to their charge; and so gave up the ghost: But his body was buried by devout men, (probably proselytes to the Christian faith,) who made great lamentations over it.

in supposing, that he might possibly be one, either of those libertine or Cilician disputants, who entered the lists with St Stephen. *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations, *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

† Whether to afford St Stephen this delightful prospect, the opening of the heavens was real, (as it is believed to have been at our Lord's baptism) or whether this, like other appearances to the prophets of the Old Testament, was represented to him by way of vision, as we cannot certainly know, so is it of no great consequence that we should. For since a vision is described by those that are particularly curious in these matters, to be "such a distinct and strong impression upon the faculty of the imagination, as sets the object before the man as plainly as if it actually were present, and perceived by his bodily senses," [Maim. Mor. Nev. part ii. c. 26.] it is not to be doubted but that either of these ways comes all to one, as to the certainty of the persuasion, and every other effect which we can suppose it is intended to produce in the mind of the person whom it ac-

tuates. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels.

†² In this prayer of our dying martyr, there are these four things observable. 1. That he looked upon his soul as a substance distinct from his body; and 2. That it continued to exist after its separation from the body. 3. That he declared our Blessed Saviour to be God omniscient and omnipotent, able to hear, and grant his prayer, and to preserve the souls committed to his care and protection. And, 4. That the spirits received by him are in a state of safety and happiness. The time of this martyrdom is by some placed after our Lord's death about eight months; by others at the distance of about four; by others again, seven years. Eusebius is express, that it followed quickly after his election into the office of deacon; from St Chrysostom and some others, who speak in his honour, we are to conclude that he was martyred young; and from ecclesiastical history we are informed, that the place where he suffered had a stately church built upon it by Eudocia, the empress, wife to Theodosius. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. i.

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Among the many that were thus enraged against Stephen, one particular person, who had but too great a hand in his death, was a young man of Cilicia, named Saul. He, out of his great officiousness to have him executed, undertook to look to the clothes of the witnesses, who usually stripped themselves to throw the first stones, as the law directed, at the person who died by their evidence; and, out of his passionate concern for the traditions of the ancients, having procured a commission from the Sanhedrim, he immediately put it in execution. For he broke open houses, seized upon all who looked like the disciples of Jesus, and, without any regard to sex or age, scourged and hauled them away to prison, compelling them to blaspheme and deny Christ, and breathing out nothing but threatenings and slaughter wherever he came; insomuch that most of the believers, except the apostles †, were forced to leave Jerusalem, and disperse themselves in the regions of Judea and Samaria, Syria and Phœnicia, Cyprus and Antioch, &c. preaching the gospel to the Jews that were in those places.

Among those who were thus dispersed, Philip the deacon, the second in order after Stephen, came to Samaria, where by his preaching and miracles he converted many. In this place there was one Simon *, who, by his sorcery and magical arts, had so strangely gained the veneration of the people, that they looked upon his diabolical illusions as real operations of the power of God; but seeing great numbers of his admirers fall off from him, and embrace the doctrine which Philip preached, he in like manner pretended to be a convert, and in hopes of obtaining some share of the miraculous gifts which he could not but admire in the evangelist, desired by him to be baptized.

The news of the conversion of so large a city as Samaria was soon brought to the apostles at Jerusalem, who thereupon sent Peter and John to confer the gifts of the Holy Ghost upon the new converts. The magician, perceiving that a power of working

† It is a very ancient tradition, mentioned by Clemens of Alexandria, that our Lord assigned twelve years after his ascension for the conversion of the unbelieving Jews in Judea, lest any of them should say, that they “had not heard of the glad tidings of the Gospel;” and Apollonius, who flourished at the same time, speaks of this *ὡς ἐν παραδόξῳ*, as delivered by tradition, that our Lord commanded his apostles, “not to depart out of Jerusalem for the space of twelve years;” which, if there be any truth in it, shews the reason why the apostles continued at Jerusalem, when the rest of the disciples were scattered abroad. *Whitby's Annotations.*

* This man was a native of Gitton, a village of Samaria, and a pretended convert to Christianity; but, upon his being rejected by the apostles, he soon turned apostate, and being a man of an ambitious and daring temper, in pure revenge, set himself in opposition to them, and became the first broacher of several abominable heresies. The account indeed, which, according to St Luke, this magician gives of himself is only this,—That he was *μέγας τις*, some great person, as mountebanks usually represent themselves; and the opinion, which his magical pranks had wrought among the Samaritans, only this:—That he was the great power of God; by which words perhaps they only meant some legate or minister of God, assisted by his mighty power: And yet from these words, very probably, the fathers tell us, that he declared himself to be the prime God; the God above all principality, power, and virtue whatever; and that to the Samaritans he was the Father; to the Jews the Son; and to

other nations the Holy Ghost. But since the history of the apostles informs us, that he believed, and was baptized in the name of Jesus, it is difficult to conceive, how he should persuade the Samaritans that he was God the Father; or the Jews, that he was the Son, or that Jesus, into whose name he was baptized; or the Gentiles, that he was that Spirit which he would have purchased with money. And therefore we may presume, that these venerable writers, out of their ardent zeal against this arch heretic, might be induced to magnify his arrogant pretensions above measure, by putting too strong an interpretation upon St Luke's words. However this be, it is certain, that he did not acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Son of God, but looked upon him as a rival, and pretended himself to be the Christ; that he held the world was not created by God, but made by angels, and therefore Divine honours were due to them, as appointed Mediators between God and men; that he accounted the ordinary worship of idols as a thing indifferent, and in times of persecution, that men might lawfully abjure the Christian faith; that he maintained an universal licence to sin; men might act as they were inclined; women might be in common; and that to press the observance of good works was inconsistent with the Gospel liberty. These were some of his principles; and in consequence of these (as Irenæus tells us), he and his followers lived in all lust and impurity, and wallowed in the most horrible and unheeded of bestialities. *Calmet's Dissert. sur Simon le Magicien; Eachard's Ecclesiastical History, and Cave's Life of St Paul.*

miracles, and speaking with tongues, was consequent upon the imposition of the apostles hands, offered to give them money to enable him to do the like; but the offer St Peter rejected with scorn and detestation, denouncing an execration against him and his money; which so terrified the caitiff, that, possibly fearing to be made an example of dissimulation, (as Ananias was) he begged the apostles prayers to God for the pardon of his sin, and the aversion of those judgments which his denunciations seemed to portend: But how false and feigned his repentance was, the sequel of this history will shew.

From Acts. i.
10. to the end.

The two apostles having thus confirmed the church of Samaria, preached the Gospel in many of the neighbouring villages with good success, and so returned to Jerusalem; while Philip being ordered by an angel, who appeared to him, to go southward into the road which led from Jerusalem to Gaza †, he there met with an eunuch †², that waited on Candace, * Queen of Ethiopia, who had been to pay his devotions at Jerusalem †³, and was then upon his journey home. As he drew near to the chariot, Philip found him commendably employed in reading a passage in the 53d chapter of Isaiah, relating to the sufferings of the Messiah; and when the treasurer expressed his desire of having the passage (which he did not so well understand) a little explained to him, and thereupon invited him into the chariot, Philip took this opportunity to preach unto him the gospel of Jesus Christ, and thereby to shew him, that not only the sense of that passage, but of several others in the ancient prophets, was fully accomplished in his person and transactions. This so fully convinced the eunuch, that with much eagerness he desired to be baptized into the Christian faith; which, when Philip had done, the

† We have before (in vol. ii. p. 73,) given an account of this city, and of the several revolutions which it underwent; and have only here to observe, that as there were two places of this name, one which was destroyed by Alexander, (say some the Great, and others Jannæus), and therefore called the desert, and another, which, by Constantine the Great, was built in a place nearer the sea than the ancient city stood, it must be of the ancient city (whose ruins, as St Jerom informs us, were visible in his time), that the sacred historian is here to be understood. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†² This word is derived from the Greek εὐνοῦχος, which signifies one who guards the bed, because generally, in the courts of the eastern kings, the care of the beds and apartments belonging to princes and princesses was committed to them, but more especially those of the princesses, who, in these countries, live in great retirement, and remote from the sight and company of men. It is not to be denied, however, that this word is in Scripture frequently set to signify any minister belonging to a prince, attending at his court, and employed more especially in some office belonging to the inner part of the palace, whether he be really an eunuch or not; but that the word in this place is to be taken in its most natural and obvious sense, seems to be evident from hence,—That the same person, who is here called an eunuch, is said to have been of great authority with the queen of Ethiopia, which would have been needless, had the word eunuch here been intended to signify any prime minister of state. In relation to this eunuch, however, some Greek copies of good repute read, that the Holy Ghost fell upon him (even as it did upon Cornelius) without the imposition of hands, by which means he was enabled to be a preacher of the Gospel in Ethio-

pia, and other places. For, even to this day, the Abyssines make it their boast, that they received the Christian religion from him, and accordingly in their form of baptism, recite the history of his conversion. *Calmet's Dictionary and Commentary.*

* Some are of opinion, that the word Candace signifies sovereign authority, and that this was a common name for all the queens who reigned in the island or peninsula of Meroe, which is the country here called Ethiopia; (not the Ethiopia in Arabia, where the queen of Sheba dwelt, but the Ethiopia in Africa, which lay below Egypt), and of whose government Pliny testifies, that it was generally in the hands of women, who, for several successions, assumed the name of Candace: And of this particular queen it is reported, that, by the preaching of this her eunuch, she was prevailed upon to turn Christian. *Whitby's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

†³ That this eunuch was a proselyte of justice, or one who, from Paganism, had embraced the Jewish faith, to which he might be converted by those Jews, who, from Alexandria, spread themselves into the African Ethiopia, is a reasonable conjecture, not only because he came so long a journey to worship at Jerusalem, probably at some great festival, but because Cornelius is expressly declared to be the first fruits of the Gentiles; and it is not unlikely, that the fame which he had heard at Jerusalem, of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, might be the reason of his reading the prophet Isaiah, who speaks more plainly of the times of the Gospel than any other, and that particular chapter, which (as Abarbanel testifies) “all the Jewish Rabbins did, with one mouth, confess, that it related to the sufferings of Messiah the king.” *Whitby's Annotations.*

A. M. 4039,
&c. or 5446.
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35, &c.

Spirit of the Lord immediately transported † him to Azotus †², from whence he proceeded as far as Cæsarea, preaching the Gospel in all the cities, while the Ethiopian pursued his journey with great joy and satisfaction of mind.

The dispersion of believers, which occasioned a propagation of the Gospel in other countries, soon excited the furious zeal of Saul to procure proper letters †³ of authority from the high priest to Damascus †⁴, that in case he should find any there, whether they were men or women, professing the Christian faith, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem, there to be punished. But as he was upon the road, and now drawing near

† That it was a common thing for the Spirit of God to convey his prophets of old from one place to another, as it were in an instant of time, is plain from Obadiah's words to Elijah, "It shall come to pass, that, as soon as I am gone from thee, the Spirit of the Lord shall carry thee whither I know not," 1 Kings xviii. 12. And from what the sons of the prophets say to Elisha, "let these men, we pray thee, go and seek thy master, lest peradventure the Spirit of the Lord hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain," 2 Kings ii. 16. This very probably might be done by the ministry of some angel, here called the Spirit, or power of the Lord; and the reason that is commonly assigned for it in the case of Philip is,—That the eunuch had requested of him to go with him into Ethiopia; whereas God, having designed him to preach the Gospel in other parts of the world, removed him in this extraordinary manner, and thereby not only prevented his compliance with the request, but gave the eunuch assurance likewise of his being a messenger sent from heaven, and consequently, that the things which had been taught him were true. *Calmet's Commentary, Whitby's and Pool's Annotations.*

†² This city, in the Old Testament, 1. Sam. v. 1, 2. is called Ashdod, and is therein memorable for the temple of Dagon. It lies upon the Mediterranean Sea, about nine or ten miles north of Gaza, and in the times when Christianity flourished in these parts was made an Episcopal See, and continued a fair village until the days of St Jerom. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†³ From hence it appears, that, however the Jews were cramped in several privileges belonging originally to their nation, yet even after they became a Roman province, their great council at Jerusalem had a jurisdiction, which extended to all synagogues, even those that were out of Judea, and that the power of capital punishments was not so far taken from them, but that, either by their own authority, or at least the consent of the Roman governors, they might in some cases inflict them. *Calmet's Commentary, and Whitby's Annotations.*

†⁴ Of the ancient history of Damascus, so far as we had occasion in the Old Testament, we have given some account before, vol. ii. page 401, in the Notes; and shall only here add a short abstract of what a late traveller of our own tells us concerning its present state, viz. "That it is situated on an even plain, of so great extent, that one can but just discern the mountains, which compass it on the farther side; that it stands on the west side of the plain, about two miles distant from the head of the river Barrady,

which waters it; is of a long straight figure, about two miles in extent, adorned with mosques and steeples, as the manner of Turkish cities is, and encompassed with gardens (according to common computation) full thirty miles round. That the river Barrady, as soon as it issues out from between a cleft of the mountain Anti-libanus into the plain, is divided into three streams, whereof the middlemost and biggest runs directly to Damascus through a large open field, called Ager Damascenus, and is distributed to all the cisterns and fountains of the city; while the other two (which seem to be the work of art) are drawn round, one to the right-hand, and the other to the left, on the borders of the gardens, into which they are let (as they pass along) by little currents, and so every where dispersed. That the houses of the city (whose streets are very narrow) are all built on the outside, with no better materials than either sun-burnt brick, or Flemish wall, and yet it is no uncommon thing to see the gates and doors adorned with marble portals, carved and inlaid with great beauty and variety, and within these portals, to find generally a large square court, beautified with fragrant trees and marble fountains, and compassed round with splendid apartments: That in these apartments, their ceilings and traves are usually richly painted and gilded, and their duans (which are a sort of low stages, seated in the pleasantest part of the room, and elevated about sixteen or eighteen inches above the floor, whereon the Turks eat, sleep, smook, receive visits, say their prayers, &c.) are floored and adorned on the sides with variety of marble, mixed in Mosaic knots and mazes, spread with carpets, and furnished all round with bolsters and cushions to the very height of luxury: That in this city is shewn the church of John the Baptist, now converted into a famous mosque, the house of Ananias, which is only a small grotto or cellar, wherein is nothing remarkable, and the house of Judas, with whom St Paul lodged, wherein is an old tomb, the supposed burying place of Ananias, which the Turks hold in so much reverence, that they maintain a lamp continually burning over it." This is the chief of the account which the ingenious Mr Maundrel gives us of the city of Damascus; and it may not perhaps be immaterial here to adjoin,—That the fruit-tree called the damascen, and the flower called the damask rose, were transplanted from the gardens belonging to this city, as those branches of silk and linen, which go under the name of damasks, were not improbably the first invention of its inhabitants. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

to Damascus, all on a sudden, about mid-day, a most amazing gleam of light, far exceeding the brightness of the sun, was darted from heaven upon him and those that were with him, and threw them all for fear prostrate upon the ground. This light was accompanied with a voice, in the Hebrew (or rather Syriac) tongue, demanding of him why it was that he persecuted him so violently? And as Saul was uncertain from whence the words came, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, (continued the voice) whom thou persecutest; but it is in vain for thee to resist the decrees of Providence, and therefore be no longer refractory, but obey the commands that shall be given thee." Whereupon Saul, in a terrible dread and agony, desiring to know what he was to do, "Go to Damascus (replied the voice), and there thou shalt know my will." Those that accompanied Saul in his journey were struck with fear and amazement, wondering that they should hear a voice, || and yet see no man speak, whilst Saul himself was so dazzled and overpowered by the light, that he quite lost his eyesight, and was led by the hand into Damascus, where he continued for the space of three days without taking any manner of sustenance.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

At this time there was in the city a certain disciple named Ananias, † whom the Lord in a vision commanded to go and find out Saul, then lodging at the house of one Judas a Jew, and, by the imposition of his hands, to cure him of his blindness. Ananias was startled at the name of the man, and to excuse himself alleged his violent persecutions of the church, and with what a wicked intent he was then come to Damascus; but to this the vision replied, that he was appointed by God to be a powerful instrument in the propagation of the Gospel, both among the Jews and Gentiles, and that how much soever he had persecuted Christianity heretofore, he was now to become a zealous defender of it, and even to die in testimony of its truth.

Encouraged with this assurance, Ananias repaired to the house where Saul was, with this joyful message,—“That the Lord Jesus, who had appeared to him in his journey, had sent him, not only to restore his eye-sight, but to bestow upon him likewise the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, such as might qualify him for the ministry to which he was then appointed.” And no sooner had Ananias ended his speech, than thick films like scales fell from the other’s eyes, whereupon he recovered his eye-sight, and, being baptized, for some days continued with the disciples at Damascus, preaching in the synagogues, and proving that Jesus was the Messias.

After some stay at Damascus, he retired (a) into the neighbouring parts of Arabia Deserta, †² where he first planted the Gospel; and in the beginning of the next year

|| In Acts xxii. 9. it is said expressly, that the men who were with Saul “heard not the voice of him that spake to him; but as the words φωνή and ἁκούειν (both employed in these passages) will admit of different significations, they will be easily reconciled by saying, That the people who accompanied Saul heard a sound, a noise, a thunder in the air (for to all these the word φωνή is applicable), but did not hear any articulate words, or did not understand (for in this sense the word ἁκούειν is often taken) what that noise or sound meant; in the same manner, as when a voice from heaven was addressed to our Lord, the people, “who stood by and heard it, said that it thundered, and others, that an angel spake to him,” and perhaps none of them understood distinctly what it said, John xii. 29. *Hammond’s* and *Whitby’s* Annotations, and *Calmet’s* Commentary.

† Who this Ananias was, we have no certain information from antiquity. The apostolical constitutions assert, that he was a layman: St Austin will

have it that he was a priest; but Œcumenius and some moderns are of opinion that he was a deacon. The Greeks maintain, that he was one of the seventy disciples, was made bishop of Damascus, and, having obtained a crown of martyrdom, was buried in the same city. However this be, it is certain, that in the place where he is said to have been interred, there is a very fine church, which though the Turks have turned into a mosque, yet they still preserve a great respect for his monument. *Calmet’s* Commentary and Dictionary.

(a) Gal. i. 17.

†² The reader need not be told, that Arabia, which is one of the most considerable divisions of Asia, is distinguished into three parts, Deserta, Petrea, and Arabia Felix, or that the Deserta borders upon Syria, and is not far distant from Damascus. What we had rather observe to him is,—That as we learn this passage of the apostle’s life from his own account only, Gal. i. 17. St Luke, who makes no mention of it

A. M. 4041,
&c. or 5418.
Ann. Dom.
37. &c.

returned to Damascus again, and there preached Christ publicly in the synagogue; so that all the Jews in that city were not a little amazed and confounded, both at the strange change in his opinions and proceedings, and the powerful efficacy of his arguments and discourses. Their malice however being incensed, at having lost so considerable a champion, pursued him close. They contrived all possible means to dispatch him; and after many attempts to no purpose, (a) made their request at last to the governor, under Aretas, † king of Arabia, that he would gratify them in his destruction. Saul, however, had early notice of this, and, knowing that the gates were day and night strictly guarded to prevent his escape, from one of the houses, that stood upon the city-wall, he was let †² down by the disciples in a basket, and so made the best of his way to Jerusalem.

Three years were now past and gone since the time of his conversion; but, notwithstanding this, when he came to Jerusalem, he found but a cold reception among many of the disciples, who were sensible of his former conduct, and as yet diffident of the reality of his change, until Barnabas, †³ who was privy to all his circumstances, having introduced him to the apostles Peter and James, vouched for his sincerity, and by declaring the miraculous manner of his conversion, and his zealous preaching at Damascus, dissipated all their doubts, and gained him the right hand of fellowship, or an intimate communion with the apostles. Here he continued preaching with all boldness, and his sermons were so powerful, and disputations with the Hellenists so unanswerable, that they too, like the Jews at Damascus, formed designs against his life; which when the brethren understood, they conducted him to Cesarea, †⁴ from

in his history in all probability did not accompany him in this journey; and this makes it the rather believed, that the intent of his going into Arabia was not to propagate the Gospel, but to find out a retreat where, by meditation and prayer, he might fit and prepare himself for his future ministry; though it is hardly conceivable, how a person of St Paul's zeal and activity could suffer himself to lie still amidst so many poor creatures that stood in need of his instructions: And therefore others have supposed, that the chief intent of his taking this journey, was to carry the glad tidings of the Gospel into a country that had never heard of it before. *Calmet's Commentary.*

(a) 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33.

† This Aretas, whose name is said to have been Æneas, before he came to the crown of Arabia, was father-in-law to Herod Antipas, who some time after divorced his daughter, and made Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, the consort of his bed: But how this Aretas, who, in the beginning of his reign, by the insinuations of one Syllaëus, fell under the displeasure of Tiberius, came to be possessed of the sovereignty of Damascus, the capital of Syria, which had been a long while a Roman province, we can no where learn. *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvi. c. 16.*

†² This was so far from betraying any want of courage in the apostle, that it was only putting in practice his Master's direction, "when they persecute you in one city flee to another," Matth. x. 23.

†³ Barnabas is supposed to have been an old acquaintance of St Paul's, and a fellow-student with him under Gamaliel; and having been lately at Antioch, it is not unlikely that he might there receive the account of his conversion, and consequent behaviour, which made him the readier to become, upon this oc-

casión, his guarantee with the apostles. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†⁴ Some commentators are of opinion, that the place to which the brethren conducted St Paul was Cæsarea Philippi, in the extreme northern parts of Palestine, from whence his way lay directly through Syria to Tarsus in Cilicia; but others, with more justness, have observed, that wherever mention is made in the New Testament of Cæsarea alone, and without any addition, it is always to be understood of the Cæsarea which Herod the Great built, and whereof Josephus gives us the following account: "There was a certain place, by the sea-side, formerly called Straton's Tower, which Herod looked upon as a very commodious tract of ground whereon to raise a city. Accordingly he drew his model, and set people to work, and in twelve years time finished it. The buildings were all of marble, private houses as well as palaces; but his master-piece was the port, which he made as large as the Pyræum (or port belonging to Athens), and a safe station against all winds and weathers.—The city stands between Dora and Joppa, two wretched sea-towns, where there is no riding in the harbours with a south-west wind, which bears so furious upon the shore, that merchantmen are forced to keep off at sea many times for fear of being driven a-ground. To encounter this difficulty of the place, Herod ordered a mole to be made, in the form of an half moon, and large enough for a royal navy to ride in, which he did, by letting down stones of a prodigious size, fifty feet in length, eighteen over, and nine deep (and some larger), in twenty-fathom water. This mole was two hundred feet in extent, whereof the one half served to break the setting in of the sea, and the other half for the foundation of a stone wall, that was fortified

whence he set sail to his own city Tarsus, † and saw not Jerusalem till several years after. From Acts. i. 10. to the end.

The church at this time had peace, and flourished exceedingly : Saul diligently preached the word in Cilicia †² and Syria †³, and Peter made a general visitation of all the saints in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria. In his progress he arrived at a town called Lydda †⁴, where he cured one Æneas of a paralytic disorder, which had confined him to his bed for eight years, and thereby prevailed with all the inhabitants of Lydda and of Saron †⁵, a neighbouring town, to embrace the Christian profession. From Lydda he was entreated by two messengers to come over to Joppa, a noted port about six miles distance, upon the account of one Tabitha †⁶, (in Greek called Dorcas) a Christian woman, venerable for her piety and diffusive charity, who was lately dead. When he came to the house, he found the body in an upper chamber ready washed and prepared for its funeral, and attended with many sorrowful widows, who durst not request of him to raise her from the dead, but, by their tears and lamentations, and large commendations of her charity, sufficiently testified their desire ; so that the apostle, having caused the company to withdraw, first kneeled down and made his supplications to God, and then turning to the body, with one word's speaking raised her up, and pre-

with turrets ; and underneath this was a key, or landing-place, with a large walk upon it round the port, as a place of pleasure to take the air in.—The houses about the port were all uniformly built, of the most excellent sort of marble, and in the middle of them, on a mount, stood a temple, which served as a sea-mark to the mariners, and was celebrated no less for its materials than its workmanship. In this temple there were two statues or images, one of Rome, and the other of Cæsar, from whom the city took its name ; and in the city, the contrivance of the very vaults and common-sewers, laid at equal distances, and discharging themselves into the sea, was very wonderful." Besides these, Josephus makes mention of a stone theatre, a spacious amphitheatre, and several other buildings, which made him, in another work of his, call it one of the fairest cities in all Judea." *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xv. c. 13. de Bello, lib. iii. c. 14. and Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

† This city is the same with what in Hebrew is called Tarshish, and as it stands in a plain, on the banks of the river Cydnus, it was all along, in ancient times, accounted so great a trading town, that all merchant ships are in Holy Writ frequently called by the name of ships of Tarshish. In the times of the Romans it was a city of great note, as being not only the metropolis of the province of Cilicia, but honoured likewise with the privileges of a Roman colony (which we find St Paul pleading in his own behalf, Acts xxii. 25, 28.), and with an academy furnished with such eminent men, that Strabo scruples not to say, they excelled all others in polite learning and philosophy, even those of Alexandria and Athens, and that Rome itself was beholden to this nursery of all sciences for its best professors ; and therefore no wonder that St Paul, who had the first foundations of his erudition laid here, became so well instructed in the liberal arts, and so well acquainted with Heathen authors. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†² This was a province of Asia Minor, which lay on the northern coast, towards the end of the Medi-

terranean Sea, and was therefore bounded by Pamphylia on the west, and Pieria on the east ; the Mount Taurus on the north, and the Cilician Sea on the south. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament, and Whitby's Alphabetical Table.*

†³ Though Syria, by heathen authors, is generally used in a larger acceptation, and so comprehends both Phœnicia and the Holy Land ; yet, as it commonly occurs in the New Testament in a stricter sense, it is bounded on the east by the Euphrates ; on the west by Phœnicia and the Mediterranean Sea ; on the north by Cilicia ; and on the south by Judea and Arabia Deserta. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table, and Calmet's Dictionary.*

†⁴ Josephus tells us, that this was a village not yielding to a city for greatness, *Antiq. lib. xx.* And he elsewhere expressly styles it a city, *De Bello, lib. ii.* It was burnt by Cestius, whilst the men were gone from it to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of tabernacles ; but, after the destruction of Jerusalem, it was rebuilt and made one of the Jewish academies. By the Gentiles it was called Diospolis, or the city of Jupiter, but by the Christians, in the times of the holy wars, it had the name of St George's, partly from a magnificent temple, which the emperor Justinian there erected in honour of that saint, and partly from an erroneous opinion then prevailing among them, that in that place he obtained the crown of martyrdom. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†⁵ Is a town adjoining to Joppa, giving name to the spacious and fruitful vale which reaches from Cæsarea to Joppa, and among the Rabbins is famous for its vines. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†⁶ The true reason why St Luke gives this interpretation of her Syriac name, seems to be this,—That as she was a Jewess, who spoke nothing but Greek, she was called by her first name among the Jews, and by her second among the Greeks ; for in both languages the two names signify the same thing, viz. a goat, or a roe. *Whitby's Annotations.*

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sented her alive to her friends and relations : which gained him a great number of converts at Joppa, and encouraged him for some considerable time to take up his abode there, lodging in the house of one Simon a tanner.

While he abode at Joppa, retiring one day † to the top of the house about noon-tide to pray, after he had ended his devotions, he found himself hungry ; but, while the people were preparing his dinner, he fell into a trance, wherein was presented to him a large sheet, or table-cloth, let down, as it were, by the four corners from heaven, wherein were creatures of all kinds, clean and unclean, and at the same time he heard a voice calling to him to kill, and eat freely of them ; which when Peter, a little too tenacious of the rites and institutions of the Mosaic law, declared his aversion to do, the voice rejoined, That what God had pronounced clean, he ought by no means to account common or unclean. This representation was made to him three several times, after which the sheet was again taken up, and the vision disappeared. But while Peter was revolving within himself what the meaning of this might be, three messengers knocked at the door, desiring to speak with him ; and when they had delivered their message, viz. That Cornelius, a Roman, captain of a company in the Italian legion †², then at Cæsarea, and a person of eminent virtue, piety, and charity, had, by an immediate command from God, sent to him ; he, the next day, with six other brethren from Joppa, went along with them, and the day following arrived at Cæsarea.

Cornelius, in expectation of his coming, had invited his friends and relations to his house, and, as Peter drew near, fell down at his feet to worship him ; but the apostle, rejecting the honour, as what was due to God alone, entered into the house, and there made his apology to the company, viz. “ That though they could not but know that it was not lawful for a Jew to converse (in the duties of religion especially) with those of another nation ; yet, since God had now taught him to make no distinction, he very readily attended their pleasure, desiring to know the occasion of their sending for him.” Whereupon Cornelius made answer, “ That he did it upon the express command of God, who, by his angel †, had ordered him to send for him at Joppa, from whom he

† At the dedication of the temple, Solomon had so oft, and so solemnly, requested of God, that he would hearken “ to the supplications of his people,” who should at any time “ spread out their hands towards that place,” 1 Kings viii. 30. 38. that it thence became a custom among the Jews, whenever they were absent from Jerusalem, to offer up their prayers in places where they might have a free prospect towards it. Thus of Daniel it is recorded, that when he prayed (as he did it three times a-day), “ the windows of his chamber were opened towards Jerusalem,” Dan. vi. 10. and therefore, in all likelihood, St Peter being now at Joppa, went up to the roof of the house to pray for the same reason. *Whitby's Annotations.*

†² The cohors of the Romans, which the Greek renders *στρίγα*, and we *band*, was a body of infantry consisting of five hundred men, ten of which bands made a legion ; and the manner in which the Romans distinguished and denominated their bands and legions was very various. Sometimes it was from the order of places, and so they were called the first or second band, according to their rank and precedency : Sometimes from the commanders they were under, as the Augustan and Claudian band, &c. because persons of that name did lead them : Sometimes from their own behaviour, as the Victrix, the Ferrea, the conquering, the iron band, &c. by reason of the great

valour which, in some sharp engagements, these had shewn : Sometimes from the countries they were chiefly quartered in, as the German and Panonian band, &c. and sometimes from the parts from whence they were gathered, as this of Cornelius is called the Italian band, because it was raised out of that country, and was a body of forces well known for their gallantry and great exploits among the writers of the Roman history. *Calmet's Commentary.*

‡ But if God was so very kind to Cornelius, as to send an angel to him, why did not he at the same time give that angel commission to instruct him in what he was to do, and to save his apostle a journey from Joppa to Cæsarea ? Now, besides the honour which God, in this method of proceeding, designed to confer upon St Peter and his ministry, it is apparent, that hereby he intended to let us know, that we are not to expect extraordinary ways of instruction where he hath instituted ordinary means. The angel, no doubt, might as readily have told Cornelius what he ought to do, as bid him send for Peter, and God could as easily have given him his Spirit at that time as four days after ; but then this would not have been so agreeable to the order which Christ had settled in his church. Christ had appointed his apostles to minister his ordinances ; and therefore God did not suffer even an angel to break in upon this economy, but ordered St Peter to wait upon the centurion, that his

should receive some special instruction, and that for this reason they were all then met together, attending the commands which he had brought them from God."

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

Hereupon St Peter began his discourse, and declared, "That now he perceived plainly that God had made no distinction of persons and people, but that the pious and godly of all nations were to meet with acceptance; that peace and reconciliation between God and man was a doctrine published by the prophets of old, and, of late, since the time of John the Baptist, preached through Galilee and Judea; that of this peace Jesus of Nazareth was the only Mediator between God and man, as appeared by the Divine powers and graces wherewith he was invested, and which he constantly exercised in doing good to mankind; that of his life and actions, more especially of his crucifixion by the Jews, and resurrection from the dead, of his appearing to his disciples, and even eating and drinking with them after his resurrection, he and the rest of the apostles were chosen witnesses; and that from him they had received, before his ascension, a command and commission to publish to all nations under heaven, that he was the person whom God had appointed to be the 'great Judge of all the world'."

While Peter was thus preaching to them, the Holy Ghost fell upon all that heard him, without the imposition of the apostles hands. This made the Jewish converts, who came along with Peter, wonder not a little, that the gifts of the Holy Ghost should be poured upon the Gentiles; but Peter perceiving it, ordered them ‡ immediately to be baptized, and (to instruct them more fully in their Christian profession) tarried for some considerable time with them.

When he returned to Jerusalem, the Jewish converts †, who still retained their inveterate prejudice against the Gentiles, utterly condemned him for conversing so familiarly, and eating with them; but, for his apology, having given them a plain narrative of the whole affair, and the occasion of it, he concluded at last with this inference,

Divine mercy might not redound upon him only, but be extended to his relations and friends. *Whitby's Annotations.*

‡ But whom did he order to do this? The Gentiles? It seems, at first sight, not a little absurd, that they who were not yet baptized themselves should baptize others. Or were they some of those who came along with him to Cæsarea? These are generally supposed to be no more than lay-brethren, who were not permitted to baptize but in cases of necessity: but, considering that St Peter was now upon his visitation through Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, it seems reasonable, that he should carry some of his deacons (at least) along with him, to attend in such offices as these. Such was the beginning of the conversion of the Gentiles: For that Cornelius and his company were the first-fruits of the heathen world, is evident from the injunction which our Saviour gave his apostles, "not to go into the way of the Gentiles," Matth. x. 5. from the practice of those that were scattered abroad upon the death of Stephen, "but preached the word to the Jews only," Acts xi. 19. from the wonder which the Jewish converts with St Peter expressed, when they say, "that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost," Acts x. 45. and from the altercation which the brethren at Jerusalem had with him at his return, "thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them," Acts xi. 3. which to me is a proof sufficient that the door of faith was not opened to the Gentiles before the conversion of Cornelius, who (according to the

account of some Latin writers) was made afterwards bishop of Cæsarea of Palestine, where he suffered martyrdom. But since Eusebius, who was bishop of that church, does not reckon him among the number of his predecessors, we have reason to suspect the truth of this piece of history. *Whitby's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

† The ancient fathers are generally of opinion, that the apostles themselves had no hand in this controversy, and some of them suppose, that the great fomentor of it was Cerinthus, whose heresy grew afterwards famous in the church: but, if we consider how zealous the Jews, even after their conversion, were for their laws and customs, Acts xxi. 20, 21, how St Peter himself, before he received this vision, laid it down for a rule, that it was unlawful for a Jew to converse with an alien, Acts x. 28. and, even after this vision, how he withdrew from the believing Gentiles, for fear of the censure of those "who came from Jerusalem," Gal. ii. 12. we cannot see why it should be inconsistent with the character of the very greatest of the apostles to enquire into the reasons of St Peter's conduct, which, according to their present persuasion, was not warrantable: Since "this was a mystery (as St Paul tells us) which, in other ages, was not known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, viz. that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of God's promise in Christ, by the Gospel," Eph. iii. 5, 6, &c. *Calmet's Commentary, and Whitby's Annotations.*

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"That since God had been pleased to bestow on these Gentiles the same privileges and marks of conversion that he had done on his select disciples, it would in him have been direct disobedience to the Divine will, had he denied them admission into the church, or refused them his instructions and conversation;" which fully satisfied the audience, and turned their displeasure against him into praise and thanksgiving to God, for having communicated the same mercy to the Gentiles that he had done to the Jews.

After the general dispersion, which followed upon St Stephen's death, some disciples, who were born at Cyprus and Cyrene †, having travelled through several countries, and hitherto preached to the Jews only, when they came to Antioch †², and there heard of the conversion of Cornelius and others, they applied themselves to the Greeks || who lived in that city, and, by the blessing of God, made great numbers of converts daily; insomuch, that the apostles who remained at Jerusalem, when they heard of this happy progress, sent Barnabas †³, a pious man, and indued with many excellent gifts, to assist the disciples, and confirm the believers in that city. The success of the Gospel in so large a place was no small consolation to him: And therefore having exhorted the brethren to hold fast the profession of their faith, he thence departed to Tarsus to find out Saul, and with him, in a short time, returned to Antioch; where, for the space of a whole year, they daily resorted to the places of public concourse, and gained con-

† This was a city of great note, and once of such power as to contend with Carthage for some pre-eminences. It stood on the western parts of Lybia, properly so called; and, as it was the principal city, it sometimes gave the name of Cyrenaica to the whole country, which, by the sacred writer, is paraphrastically called Lybia about Cyrene, Acts ii. 10. The city itself is famous in profane writers for being the birth-place of Eratosthenes the mathematician, of Callimachus the poet, and, in Holy Writ, of Simon, whom the Jews compelled to bear our Saviour's cross. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†² This Antioch, to distinguish it from sixteen other cities which, in Syria and other countries, bore that name, was frequently called Antiochia Epidaphne, from its neighbourhood to Daphne, a village where the temple of Daphne stood. It was built, as some say, by Antiochus Epiphanes; as others, by Seleucus Nicanor, the first king of Syria after Alexander the Great, in memory of his father Antiochus, and was, after that, the royal seat of the kings of Syria. In the flourishing times of the Roman empire, it was the ordinary residence of the prefect or governor of the eastern provinces, and was also honoured with the residence of many of the Roman emperors, especially of Verus and Valens, who spent here the greatest part of their time. As to its situation, it lay on both sides the river Orontes, about twelve miles distant from the Mediterranean Sea; was in former times adorned with many sumptuous palaces and stately temples, and both by nature and art fortified even to admiration; but being taken by the Saracens, and afterwards by the Turks, it began to grow into decay, and is now in so desolate and ruinous a condition, that the patriarch has long since removed his dwelling to Damascus. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table, and Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

|| The learned Grotius is pretty positive, [and Griesbach agrees with him] that instead of πρὸς τοὺς

Ἑλληστίστας, as it is in our vulgar copies, and denotes such Jews as spake the Greek language, we should read πρὸς τοὺς Ἑλληνας, i. e. Greeks who were Gentiles, for which he produces not only the Syriac, Arabic, and Latin versions, but the Alexandrian manuscript likewise, as indeed the whole series and purport of St Luke's discourse seems to require it. For having given us an account of what happened to Cornelius at Cæsarea, he next proceeds to another piece of history of the like nature, viz. the conversion of several other Gentiles in the city of Antioch, which, when it came to be known at Jerusalem, confirmed the brethren in the belief of God's design to receive the Gentiles into the bosom of his church, and gave a great weight to what St Peter had testified concerning this matter. *Whitby's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

†³ The Scripture acquaints us, Acts iv. 36. that his name was originally Joses, that he was descended of the tribe of Levi, but born at Cyprus; and that as he was the first who sold an estate and put the purchase money into the common fund then applied to the sustenance of poor Christians, he very likely from that action received the name of Barnabas, which (according to St Luke's interpretation) signifies "the son of consolation." But besides the qualifications mentioned in the text, there were two other reasons that might induce the apostles to make choice of Barnabas, preferably to any other upon this occasion; 1st, Because he was a great master of the Greek, which was the current language of Antioch, as being himself born at Cyprus, where that language only was in use. And, 2dly, Because the apostles thought it might be more agreeable to these first planters of the Gospel in Antioch, (who were a great many of them natives of Cyprus) to have a fellow-labourer of the same country sent amongst them. *Calmet's Commentary.*

verts so numerous and considerable, that in this city the disciples of Jesus first obtained the honourable name of CHRISTIANS †. From Acts. i.
10. to the end.

This opened an intercourse between Jerusalem and Antioch; so that when certain persons who, at that time, had the spirit of prophecy, were come from Jerusalem, and among them, one named Agabus †² had foretold, that there would shortly be a great famine in many parts of the Roman empire, (which accordingly happened in the fourth year of the reign of Claudius) the Christians of Antioch determined to make a collection for their brethren in Judea †³; which, upon the approach of the dearth, they accordingly did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul: But before their arrival at Jerusalem, Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great, (merely to ingratiate himself with the Jews) raised a sharp persecution against the Christians. He ordered James (the son of Zebedee †⁴ and brother of John), commonly called the Great, to be beheaded; and having apprehended Peter and put him in prison, he set a guard of sixteen soldiers upon him, designing, immediately after the feast of the Passover, to bring him forth to the Jews, and, if they desired it, to have him executed. But the very night before the day intended for his arraignment and execution, God sent an angel from heaven, who knocked off his chains †⁵, opened the prison door, and without the

† Before this, they were called, among themselves, brethren, saints, disciples, believers, the faithful, and those that called on the name of Christ; and among their enemies, Galileans, Nazarenes, and the men of the sect; but now, by the conversion of so many heathens both in Cæsarea and Antioch, the believing Jews and Gentiles being all made one church, this new name was given them as more expressive of their common relation to their master Christ; and that it was given in a solemn manner, we have reason to conclude from the propriety of the original word. For *ἐκκλησιαστικὸν* is commonly used with regard to edicts and proclamations, such especially as contain the people's professions of allegiance to emperors, and the privileges granted by them to the people: And therefore it seems not improbable, that the imposition of this name was done by a public act and declaration of the whole church, about the beginning of the reign of Claudius, ten years after our Lord's ascension, (as an ancient historian informs us) whether Euodius was at that time the bishop of Antioch or no. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, and *Cave's* Lives of the Apostles.

†² Who this Agabus was, we have no account in any ecclesiastical history, only the Greeks tell us that he was one of our Lord's seventy disciples, and as he is said to have suffered martyrdom at Antioch, accordingly they observe his festival on the eighth of March: But in regard to the truth of his prophecy, Eusebius tells us, that the famine which he foretold oppressed almost the whole empire, and was recorded by historians the most averse to the Christian religion, viz. by Dion Cassius, who calls it a very great famine, Hist. lib. xvi. ; by Josephus, who tells us, that in Judea many perished for want of victuals, Antiq. lib. xx. c. 2. ; and by Suetonius, who observes, that the emperor himself, upon this occasion, was so insulted by the people in the common market-place, that he was obliged, by a postern gate, to retire into his palace. In *Claudio*, chap. xviii. *Calmel's* Commentary, and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†³ The reasons why this supply was principally sent to Judea, might be, either because there the calamity fell heaviest, or because believers were like to find least pity there, or because this was a fitting testimony of gratitude to the country from whence the means of their conversion first came, according to that subsequent reasoning of St Paul's, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, ought it to be accounted a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" 1 Cor. ix. 11. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels.

†⁴ These titles are given the apostle either upon the account of his age, or to distinguish him from another of the same name who was bishop of Jerusalem, and is usually styled the Less. He was by country a Galilean, and born very probably either at Capernaum or Bethsaida. He had his first institution (together with his brother John the evangelist) under the Baptist, but how he disposed of himself after our Lord's ascension, it does not certainly appear. St Jerome makes him to have preached to the Jews of the dispersion; but that his labours carried him at all out of Judea, or even from Jerusalem itself, no authentic history informs us. That his zeal was very industrious and ardent there, no other proof is necessary, than that Agrippa, a great asserter of the Jewish religion, made choice of him for the first sacrifice to the fury of the people; But that his courage and constancy at the time of his trial was such, as even converted his accuser, made him come and fall down at his feet, and heartily beg pardon for what he had said against him; and that, after the apostle had forgiven him, he, in the presence of the whole assembly, declared himself likewise to be a Christian, and so they were both beheaded together, is evident from the testimony of Eusebius, lib. ii. c. 9. who had this account (as he acquaints us) from the Institutions of Clemens of Alexandria. *Cave's* Lives of the Apostles, and *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels.

†⁵ That the manner of securing a prisoner was to have him fastened, by two chains, to two soldiers or

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guards once perceiving it, carried him quite out; whereupon he went directly to the house of Mary †, the mother of John, surnamed Mark, where several disciples were met together, and sending up their prayers to heaven for his deliverance. As he stood knocking without, a maid of the house named Rhoda, perceiving that it was his voice, ran in and acquainted the company that Peter was at the door; but when she persisted in the thing, they concluded rather that it must have been his angel †², until, being let in, he related to them the whole manner of his miraculous escape; and having ordered them to acquaint James and the other brethren with this good news, he withdrew himself to a place of more retirement and security.

In the morning, as soon as it was day, the soldiers, missing their prisoner, were in the utmost confusion, and Agrippa, finding himself disappointed in his wicked design, commanded the keepers to be put to death, as supposing them accessory to St Peter's escape, and so departed from Jerusalem to Cæsarea *. While he was here, the ambassadors of Tyre and Sidon, relying on the interest they had with Blastus, the lord high chamberlain, came to solicit an accommodation of some difference that had lately happened between their states and the king, and that the rather, because in this time of scarcity their † country was in a great measure dependant on the king's dominions for its support. Agrippa, though highly displeased with them, appointed them a day of audience; and being dressed in his royal robes, and seated on his throne, made such an oration, as the flattering multitude called "the speech of a god, and not of a man," which he, with a secret pride and vanity, assuming to himself, was, that moment, struck by an angel with a "mortification in his bowels."² of which, in a short time, he died.

keepers, on each side one, while two others stood guard at the prison-door, is very plain from the text in this place; but that some of these soldiers, converted to the Christian faith, should mark and take away these chains, and give them to the bishop of Jerusalem; and that they should be kept, as a treasure, not only through all the Jewish wars, but about four hundred years after, till Juvenal, bishop of Jerusalem, gave them to Eudoxia, wife to Theodosius the Younger, who gave one of them to the church of St Peter in Constantinople, and sent the other to Rome, is a legend, that smells too rank of superstition to deserve the least credit. *Whitby's* Annotations.

† This house stood upon Mount Sion, and, according to Epiphanius, having escaped the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, it was afterwards turned into a famous church, (called the church of Sion) which endured for several ages. *Calmet's* Commentary and Dictionary.

†² That the word ἄγγελος, or angel, signifies not only a celestial spirit, but also a messenger sent from one to another, we allow is manifest from several passages in Scripture; but that it cannot, in this place, denote a common messenger, is evident for this reason, viz. That the damsel could know St Peter no otherwise than either by his voice or face, which the company might believe his angel was capable of imitating; whereas St Peter could not but know that no messenger from the prison (had he been allowed to send one) was able to do this: And therefore, since it was a vulgar opinion among the Jews, that good men had their tutelar angels, or at least that angels were sent down from heaven about their affairs, they by this angel might understand, either erroneously

a guardian angel attending on him, or, agreeably to Scripture, an angel sent down from heaven to acquaint them with something relating to him, in answer to their prayers. *Hammond's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

* Josephus, who gives us an account both of this journey, and the occasion of it, informs us, that "he went down to the city of Cæsarea to perform the solemnities and the games which were there celebrated every Olympiad to the honour of Cæsar, and that the nobles and governors of Syria repaired to that city for the same purpose." *Antiq. lib. xix. c. 7.*

‡ The inhabitants of the countries of Tyre and Sidon, which were very narrow and pent up by the sea, took little pains in the cultivation of their ground. Their whole business and employment was commerce; and therefore they were beholden to Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, (which were all at this time under Agrippa's jurisdiction) for most of the common necessities of life, as appears from 1 Kings v. 9. 11: and Ezekiel xxvii. 17. *Calmet's* Commentary.

** In testimony of the truth of this piece of Sacred History, Josephus relates the manner of this king's death, and what was esteemed the occasion of it, in the following terms:—"Upon the second day of the festival Agrippa went early in the morning to the theatre, in a silver stuff, so wonderfully rich and curious, that the beams of the rising sun striking upon it, peoples eyes were dazzled with the reflection; and as the sparkling of the light seemed to have something divine in it, it moved the spectators, at the same time, both with veneration and dread. Hereupon a crew of fawning parasites cried him up

About the time of the death of Agrippa, Saul and Barnabas, having disposed of their contributions to the Christians in Jerusalem and Judea, returned back to the city of Antioch, and brought with them Mark †; but they had not long been there before God, by some particular inspiration, gave them to understand, that he had appointed them to carry his word into other places: Whereupon the church that was at Antioch betook themselves to fasting and prayer; and Simeon ‡, Lucius †², and Manaen †³, men endued with a spirit of prophecy, laid their hands †⁴ on them, and so sent them away to preach wherever the Holy Ghost should require them to go.

From Acts. i.
10 to the end.

When therefore they had departed from Antioch, they first came to Seleucia †⁵,

for a god, and 'beseeched him in form to forgive them the sins of their ignorance, when they took him only for flesh and blood like another man, but they were now convinced (they said) of an excellency in his nature more than human.' This impious flattery passed upon him without either check or repulse: But while he was in the vanity of this contemplation, lifting up his eyes, he saw an owl in the air over his head, sitting upon a rope, which he found soon after to be the presage of mischief to him, as it had been before of good luck: For he fell immediately into violent gripes and torments in his bowels, and in this agony, directing his speech to his friends about him, 'Look ye (says he) your god is now condemned to die; and by this fatal necessity I am about to prove all my flatterers to be a company of profligate liars, and to convince the world, by dying, that I am not immortal;—but God's will be done.'—With these words his pain increased upon him, so that he was forced to remove into his palace; and as it continued without any manner of abatement, at the end of five days it carried him off, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and the seventh of his reign." Antiq. lib. xix. c. 7. Josephus indeed does not say, that he was "eaten up of worms," but he tells us, that he had terrible pains in his guts, which, in the space of five days, might breed worms in him, as he confesses they did in his grandfather. *Whitby's Annotations.*

† This person, who is sometimes called John Mark, and at other times simply Mark, or John, is very improperly confounded with the evangelist St Mark. He was the cousin and disciple of Barnabas, and the son of a Christian woman, whose name was Mary, who had an house at Jerusalem, where the faithful and the apostles generally met. What part he bore in the propagation of the Gospel the Acts of the Apostles inform us. Notwithstanding the difference between St Paul and Barnabas, which arose concerning him, St Paul speaks advantageously of him in his epistle to the Colossians, chap. iv. 10. in that to Philemon, ver. 24. and in his second to Timothy, chap. iv. 11. The Greeks give him the title of an apostle, and say that the sick were cured merely by his shadow. Some make him the bishop of Biblis in Phœnicia; but others, with more probability, report, that he died at Ephesus; but as to the time or manner of his death we are utterly in the dark. *Calmet's Commentary.*

‡ This Simeon, who is surnamed Niger, is supposed by some to be the same with Simon the Cyrenæan, who bore our Saviour's cross; but for this opinion

there is no other proof than the similitude of names, which in this case is far from being exact, since St Luke always calls Simon the Cyrenæan by the name of Simon, but Simon Niger by the name of Simeon. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†² This Lucius is said by some to have been one of our Lord's seventy disciples, and to have been by the apostles constituted the first bishop of Cyrene; but of these, and some other pretended passages of his life and death, we have no manner of certainty. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†³ This Manean must needs have been a person of a considerable family and distinction, because we find that he was brought up with Herod Antipas the tetrarch, who put John the Baptist to death; and yet we are told that he was one of the seventy disciples, and suffered martyrdom at Antioch, but when, or in what manner, we have no information. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†⁴ Some have imagined, that this imposition of hands was a solemn ordination of Paul and Barnabas to be bishops in the Christian church; but besides the incongruity of an apostle's being ordained bishop by those of an inferior order, as prophets and teachers were, Acts xiii. 1. St Paul declares for himself, that he "was an apostle, not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ," Gal. i. 1. And as the apostleship comprehends in it all ecclesiastical power, this laying on of hands was not designed to give them any episcopal authority, as is pretended, but merely to "recommend them to the grace of God for the work which they were to fulfil," Acts xiv. 26. as being a ceremony that attended prayer and benediction, and other solemn actions as well as ordination. Thus the children of Israel laid their hands on the Levites when they were separated to the service of Aaron and his sons, Numb. vii. 10. and thus our Blessed Saviour, when "the children were brought to him, put his hands upon them and blessed them," Matth. xix. 15. So that this imposition of hands upon Paul and Barnabas was precatory, not consecratory, designed to implore the blessing of heaven upon their mission to the Gentiles, and not to ordain or confirm them bishops of the church of Christ. *Miscell. Sac. vol. ii.*

†⁵ This city lay on the west, or rather a little north-west of Antioch, upon the Mediterranean Sea, and was so named from the founder of it, Seleucus, who was reputed to be the greatest builder in the world; for he is said to have founded nine cities called by his own name: sixteen in memory of his father Antiochus; six by the name of Laodice his mother;

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from whence they took shipping for Cyprus, and in the city of Salamis † first began their ministerial office. Here they preached in the synagogues, and employed Mark, who was of their company, in several offices of the church, which they could not attend themselves. From Salamis they crossed the island unto Paphos †², where the proconsul, or governor of the place, (who at that time was Sergius Paulus) had his residence; a man of great wisdom and prudence, but unhappily seduced by a Jewish sorcerer, named Bar-jesus. Upon their preaching there, the governor, being informed of something extraordinary, sent to the apostles to hear their doctrine. But the sorcerer warmly opposed this, and used all possible methods to hinder his conversion; which when Saul perceived, he, in the governor's presence, having sharply rebuked him, denounced a judgment of blindness upon him; which being immediately inflicted, convinced the proconsul, and converted him to the faith; and from this event (as some imagine) our apostle had the surname of Paul †³ given him.

From the isle of Cyprus St Paul and his company sailed to Perga in Pamphylia †⁴, where Mark, not greatly liking this itinerant course of life, took his leave of the apostles, and returned to Jerusalem. At Perga they made no stay, but proceeded directly to Antioch in Pisidia †⁵, where, going into the synagogue, and being courteously invited †⁶ to make a comment or discourse (as the custom then was) upon the lessons out of the law and the prophets, that were just before read in the congregation, St Paul took this opportunity, in a long discourse, to shew, "That Jesus was the true Messiah foretold by the prophets, and declared by John the Baptist; that though he was

and three in honour of Apamia his first wife; besides many others of great note in Greece and Asia, either new built, or beautified and repaired by him. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

† This was once a famous city in the isle of Cyprus, opposite to Seleucia, on the Syrian coast; and as it was the first place where the Gospel was preached, it was, in the primitive times, made the See of the primate or metropolitan of the whole island. In the reign of the emperor Trajan it was destroyed by the Jews, and rebuilt; but after that, being, in the year 648, sacked, and razed to the ground by the Saracens, it never recovered its former splendour, though out of its ruins is said to have arisen Famagusta, which was the chief place of the isle, when the Turks took it from the Venetians, in the year 1570. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†² This was another city of Cyprus, lying on the western (as Salamis did on the eastern) tract of the island, where Venus (who from hence took the name of Paphia) had her most ancient and celebrated temple, and where the Roman proconsul, at this time, had his seat of residence. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†³ It is very observable, that all along before this passage of the apostle's life, St Luke calls him by the name of Saul, but ever after by that of Paul; which makes some imagine, that he assumed that name to himself, in memory of his converting of Sergius Paulus; just as the ancient Roman generals were wont to adopt the names of the provinces which they conquered. St Austin more than once asserts, that he took it out of a principle of humility, by a small variation changing his former name, whereby a proud, haughty king of Israel was called, into that of *Paulus*, which signifies *little*; and that, in conformity to this,

he calls himself *ἡλαχιστότερος*, Eph. iii. 8. "less than the least of the apostles." But the most rational account of the matter seems to be that of Origen, viz. that he being of Jewish parentage, and born in Tarsus, a Roman city, had at his circumcision two names given him, Saul, a Jewish, and Paul, a Roman name, and that when he preached to the Jews, he was called by his Jewish, and when to the Gentiles (as he did chiefly after this time), by his Roman name. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Hammond's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†⁴ Pamphylia is a province of Asia Minor, which gives the name to that part of the Mediterranean Sea which washes its coasts, Acts xxvii. 5. To the south it is bounded by the Mediterranean; and to the north by Pisidia, having Lycia to the west, and Cilicia to the east: And as for Perga, a city of this province, it is memorable among the heathens for the temple of Diana, who was thence called Diana Pergæa, and for the solemn festivals, which, in honour of her, were there annually observed. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†⁵ Pisidia is a small province in Asia Minor, bounded on the south by Pamphylia, and on the north by Galatia; having Lycaonia to the east, and Phrygia to the west. Its inhabitants are commended by Livy for their skill in war above other Asiatics, lib. xxxviii. c. 13. and its chief city was Antioch, built by Seleucus, in honour of his father Antiochus, and, to distinguish it from others of the same name, usually called Antiochia Pisidia. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table*, and *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†⁶ What the service of the synagogue was, particularly as to the reading of the law and the prophets, and expounding thereupon, we had occasion to explain before, vol. ii. p. 572.

barbarously treated, and crucified, and slain by the Jews, yet this was no more than what the same prophets had foretold would happen to the Messiah; that God's raising him from the dead, according to the predictions relating to the Messiah, and, after his resurrection, shewing him to multitudes of witnesses then alive, and ready to attest the truth of it, were the highest demonstrations of his being the Son of God; and that therefore, since forgiveness of sins, and justification (which could not be attained by the law of Moses) were now tendered to them by their believing in Jesus, it nearly concerned them, as a matter of the last importance, "not to neglect so great salvation." From Acts. i.
10. to the end.

This the congregation heard with great attention; and as they were going out of the synagogue, the Gentiles desired of St Paul to speak again to them upon the same subject on the following Sabbath; and several Jews and proselytes who believed, waited upon Paul and Barnabas for farther instruction. The next Sabbath, the whole city flocked to the synagogue to hear the apostle's discourse; which when the unbelieving Jews saw, such was their envy and despite, that they not only opposed themselves with blasphemy against what St Paul preached, but, perceiving the progress which the Gospel made, not in that city only, but in all the neighbouring country, they applied themselves to some female † proselytes of distinction, who, by their interest with the principal men of the city, forced the apostles to depart to Iconium †²; and after some stay there (their malice pursuing them thither likewise), caused them to hasten to Lystra; where they continued for some time, preaching the Gospel to the inhabitants of that city, and to the people of the parts adjacent.

At Lystra there was a man named Æneas, lame from his birth, whom St Paul perceiving, by his diligent attention to his preaching, that he had faith to be healed, immediately cured. This so amazed and transported the standers by, that, acknowledging a Divine power in the miracle, they took them for two gods, * disguised in human shape; calling Paul, || as chief speaker, Mercury; and Barnabas, perhaps for his gravity, or majestic looks, Jupiter. The priest of Jupiter therefore, as soon as he was acquaint-

† Women, who being originally Gentiles, had embraced the Jewish religion; and of converts of this kind it is generally observed, that their zeal and superstition is usually blinder, and their attention to reason, in matters of religion, weaker, than what belongs to the other sex, insomuch, that some ecclesiastical writers have made it their remark, that there never was any heresy or schism in the Christian church, but what was either begun or fomented by women of wealth and distinction. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†² This was the chief city of Lycaonia, a small province of Asia Minor, lying to the east, or north-east rather, of Pisidia; and adjoining southward to Pamphylia and Cilicia. This city is said by Strabo to have been well built, and situated in the richest part of the province. It was once a place of such strength and consequence, that the Turkish kings of the Lesser Asia, when they were most distressed by the western Christians, made it the seat of their empire, and at present it is in so considerable a condition as to be the residence of a Turkish bashaw. The other two cities of this province are Lystra and Derbe; but of them we meet with nothing remarkable, except what the sacred story relates. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

* That this was a common notion of the heathens is evident, not only from that passage in Homer,

Καί τε Οἱοὶ ξείνοισιν ἱερότες ἄλλοδαποῖσι
Παντοίοι τελέοντες ἐπιστρωφᾶσι πολλῆας.

Odys. ε 485.

and that in Ovid,

—Summo delabor Olympo,

Et Deus humanâ lustrò sub imagine terras,
but even from the testimony of their philosophers; and therefore we find Cicero endeavouring to prove that the gods must be of human shape, because they never appeared in any other form. *De Nat. Deorum. Calmet's Commentary, and Whitby's Annotations.*

|| The account which St Paul's enemies gave of him is this,—“His letters are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible,” 2 Cor. x. 10. His discourses, indeed, were not formed upon the plan of the Greek-orators. The vain ornaments which they were so fond of, as tending only to impair the strength and majesty of the truths which he taught, were by him held in great contempt; for “his speech and his preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but with demonstration of the Spirit and power,” 1 Cor. ii. 4. St Jerom, who finds some fault with his style, as to its harshness, and want of purity, does nevertheless declare, that, when he reads him, every word seems like a clap of thunder, in Catal. Scrip. Eccles. And St Chrysostom, in his book de Sacerdotio, makes

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ed with the matter, brought oxen, all adorned with garlands, * to the door of the house where Paul and Barnabas were, in order to sacrifice to them. But when the apostles saw what they were going to do, they rent their clothes, and running in among the people, cried aloud, "That they were mistaken in their object of their worship; that, notwithstanding the miracle they had wrought, they were no more than men; and that the chief end of their preaching was to turn them from these idolatrous practices, to the worship of the only true God, who, by his Almighty power, had made heaven and earth, and, by his kind Providence, given them all the blessings they enjoyed." But, with all these arguments, it was as much as they could do to restrain them from sacrificing.

It was not long however before they turned to the other extreme; for some Jews, who had pursued the apostles from Antioch and Iconium, so far instigated the giddy multitude against them, that they took Paul, whom just before they would have adored, and stoned him, and then drew him out of the city, supposing him to be dead: but when the disciples came (probably to inter his body), he rose up, and went into the city for that night; but the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe; where having preached the Gospel, and converted many to the faith, they thence returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch; in which places, having confirmed the new converts in the belief and profession of Christianity, and, with fasting, and prayer, and imposition of hands, ordained presbyters in every church, they recommended them to the special protection of God, and so took their leave.

From Antioch they passed through Pisidia, and thence came to Pamphylia; and, having preached to the people at Perga, they went down to Attalia †, and from thence returned by sea to Antioch in Syria, whence they had set out about three years before upon this holy expedition. Here they assembled the church together †², and, having given an account of their success, what miracles God had wrought by their hands, and what a large door of faith he, by their ministry, had opened to the Gentiles, they suspended their journeyings for the present, and for some considerable time took up their abode among the disciples of this place.

While they continued here, some persons, coming from Judea, pretended to teach,

mention of the great admiration which his epistles had gained him, both among Jews and Gentiles; no wonder then that the people of Lystra, upon hearing his strong and unaffected eloquence, should take him for Mercury, who (according to the heathen notion) was the constant companion of Jupiter, the teacher of men, and the interpreter of the gods. *Calmet's Commentary.*

* These *στέφανα*, which may be rendered *crowns*, or *garlands*, some think, were to be put upon the heads of Paul and Barnabas, according to the heathen custom of crowning their gods; but it seems more likely, that they were to adorn the head and neck of the ox, or heifer, that was to be sacrificed; for so we read in Ovid,

Victima labe carens, et præstantissima formâ
Sistitur ante aras, vittis præsignis, et auro.

Met. lib. xv.

† Attalia, which takes its name from king Attalus its founder, and, with a small variation, is still called Statalia, is a city of Pamphylia, which stands upon a fair bay, and is so commodiously seated for trade, that the Turks have preserved it from ruin, and, at this day, are very careful to keep its fortifications and castle in repair. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†² St Luke gives us no manner of an account of what passed in the church from St Paul's returning to Antioch in Syria, which was in the 46th, to his deputation to the council at Jerusalem, which was in the 51st year of Christ. How he spent this intermediate time we cannot tell; but sure we are, that his zeal for the Christian cause would not permit him to be idle; and therefore we may suppose, that this was the opportunity he took to preach the Gospel, not only through the provinces adjacent to Antioch, but through several other places, "where Christ had not been named, that he might not build upon another man's foundation," Rom. xv. 20. Himself, in his second epistle to the Corinthians, acquaints us with many journeyings, and labours, and stripes, and imprisonments, that are not recorded in the book of Acts; particularly he tells us, that five times he had been scourged by the Jews, and three times beaten with rods by the Romans; that thrice he had suffered shipwreck, and a day and a night had been in the deep, tossed to and fro in the sea, upon some plank or broken piece of the ship, 2 Cor. xi. 23, &c. and a properer time for these sad events to befall him, we cannot assign, than where the Sacred History has made a vacancy in his life, *Calmet's Commentary.*

that there was no salvation without circumcision †, and the observance of the other legal ceremonies. Paul and Barnabas strongly opposed this doctrine; but, after many conferences and disputations, it was at length proposed, that the decision of the question should be referred to the general assembly of the apostles at Jerusalem †². This the whole church readily agreed to; and having deputed Barnabas and Paul, together with some others of their body, to go with the message, they conducted them part of their way; and the two apostles, in passing through Phœnicia †³ and Samaria, took care to relate what success they had met with in the conversion of the Gentiles, to the great joy and comfort of all the brethren in those parts.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

When they were come to Jerusalem, they first addressed themselves to Peter, James, and John, the pillars and principal persons in that place, who received them very kindly; and perceiving, by the account which St Paul gave them, that the (a) “gospel of the uncircumcision” was committed to him, as that of circumcision was to Peter, they ratified it by compact and agreement, that Peter should preach to the Jews, and Paul to the Gentiles; and, upon calling the council, wherein Peter declared his sense of the insufficiency of all legal observance to save those, who could expect salvation only “through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ”; and wherein Paul and Barnabas gave an account of the wonders and miracles, which God had enabled them to work in converting the Gentiles, it was finally determined by St James, as bishop of the place, and president of the council, that the Gentiles, who were converted to Christianity, should not be obliged to submit to the yoke of the law, but only abstain from fornication †⁴, and

† Those who maintained this position were Jews, of the sect of the Pharisees, Acts xv. 5. converted to Christianity, but still too zealous for the observance of the law; and their coming immediately from Judea might make it the rather believed, that the necessity of circumcision, in order to salvation, was a tenet of the apostles. It is to be observed, however, that the Jews themselves were of different opinions in this matter, even as to mens admission into their religion. For some of them would allow those of other nations who owned the true God, and practised moral duties, to live quietly among them, and even without circumcision to be admitted into their religion; whilst others would admit of no such thing. Thus Josephus tells us, that when Izates, the son of Helen, queen of Adiabene, embraced the Jews religion, Ananias, who converted him, declared that he might do it without circumcision; but Eleazer, another eminent Jew, maintained, that it was a great impiety in such circumstances to remain uncircumcised; and this difference of opinion continued among the Jewish converts after their embracing Christianity, some allowing Gentiles to become converts to Christianity, without submitting to circumcision and the Jewish law, whilst others contended, that without circumcision, and the observance of the law, their profession of the Christian faith would not save them. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Beausobre's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†² St Paul, in his epistle to the Galatians, lets us into a circumstance that is not recorded in the history of the Acts, viz. “that he went up at this time to Jerusalem by revelation, Chap. ii. 2. for, as the prophets and teachers at Antioch had before separated him and Barnabas, by revelation, to preach to some of the Gentiles, and they having fulfilled that work,

returned to Antioch again, Acts xiv. 26. so it is probable, that by another revelation made to the same persons, they were sent up to Jerusalem, as being the fittest to convince those of a contrary persuasion, by declaring what God had wrought by them among the uncircumcised Gentiles, and his acceptance of them without circumcision, or the observance of the law of Moses. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†³ This was a province of Syria, which, in the times of the New Testament, lay between the two rivers Elutherus to the north, and Chersus (or the Kishon in Scripture) to the south. In the phrase of the Gospel it is called the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, because these two towns stood in the southern part of it; and for its great skill in navigation, and the invention of letters, (which, according to Herodotus, were brought thence by Cadmus into Greece) is justly celebrated by the ancients. *Wells's* Geography of the New Testament, and *Whitby's* Alphabetical Table.

(a) Gal. ii. 7.

†⁴ That we are absolutely obliged to abstain from fornication, no good Christian can seriously make a matter of dispute; for how favourably soever the Gentiles might look upon it, or how much soever it might obtain among the Jews, under the name of polygamy, nothing is more plain, than that fornication was accounted an heinous crime under the Old Testament, and that the wisest of the heathen world always esteemed chastity a virtue. However, since the greatest part of them acted as if they thought fornication a thing indifferent, and in many of their idolatrous festivals made lewdness a necessary and principal ingredient, it hence came to pass, that the council at Jerusalem thought proper to insert this prohibition in their decree. *Beausobre's* Annotations.

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from eating things offered to idols †, things strangled, and blood, †² which, in the present circumstances of the church, were highly necessary. With this decree, which was drawn up in the form of an epistle, Paul and Barnabas were sent back to the church of Antioch, and with them the council joined Judas †³ and Silas, two eminent men of their own number, that, by their testimony of what was transacted at Jerusalem, the false teachers might be silenced, and the believing Gentiles confirmed in the truth. Being arrived at Antioch, they assembled the church, and presented the decretal epistle to them, in the presence of the whole congregation: Which when they had read, the Gentile converts rejoiced greatly to find themselves discharged from the burden of the law, and confirmed in their Christian liberty by an apostolic decree.

While they were in Antioch, Judas and Silas were not idle; but, being both men of excellent gifts in the interpretation of the Scriptures, they employed their time in confirming believers in the truth of Christianity; and, after a short stay, were, with all kindness and civility, dismissed by the church, in order to return to Jerusalem: But Silas, for some reasons, was unwilling to depart so soon, and chose rather to tarry with Paul and Barnabas, who, with several others of their fraternity, employed themselves in instructing those who had already received the Christian faith, and in preaching it to others who had not yet embraced it, in this great and populous city.

It was not long after the determination of the council at Jerusalem, that Peter came to Antioch; where, using the liberty, which the Gospel had given him, for some time he conversed familiarly with the Gentile converts, eating with them, and living in the same manner as they did. But when some Jewish Christians, still tenacious of the ceremonial law, came from Jerusalem, for fear of offending or displeasing them, he separated himself from the Gentile converts, and refused to eat with them; whereby he not only confirmed the Jews in their darling opinions, but filled the Gentiles likewise with new doubts and scruples. St Paul, who was not ignorant of what pernicious influence the example of so great an apostle might be, (especially when he saw Barnabas carried away with the stream of his dissimulation) was not afraid, even in the face of

† The heathens of this age used the same arts to seduce the Christians, and bring them to their temples, that the Moabites had formerly done to corrupt the Israelites, calling and inviting them to eat of the sacrifices which they had offered to their false gods. To this purpose our Saviour, in his letter to the church of Pergamus, makes mention of some who held "the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols," Rev. ii. 14. Great reason therefore had the council to forbid Christians this profane practice, because (as St Paul expresses his sense of the matter) "we cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of the devils," 1 Cor. x. 21. i. e. it is highly unfit that Christians, who eat of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, should defile themselves with meats that have been sacrificed to what the Gentiles call gods, but are in reality no better than devils. *Whitby's Annotations.*

†² The Jews had so strong an aversion to blood, that they accounted all who made use of it in food, as creatures sadly polluted, and gross transgressors even of the law of nature. The Gentiles, on the contrary, looked upon blood as the most delicious food of their gods, and thought that by eating of it, they entered into a more intimate communion with them: and therefore the prohibition of it was necessary for these two reasons: 1st, That no offence might be

given to the Jewish converts, who would be loth to converse, much more to join, in any religious offices with persons who indulged themselves in such meats as they detested; and, 2dly, That the Gentile converts might be in no danger of relapsing into idolatry, which they possibly might do, if a toleration to eat things offered to idols were still indulged them. *Beausobre's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

†³ It is generally thought, that Judas, who is surnamed Barsabas, was the brother of Joses, or Joseph, who, together with Matthias, was proposed as a candidate for the apostleship, which Judas the traitor by his transgression had forfeited; and Silas is supposed to be the same person, that under the name of Sylvanus is mentioned in the title of both St Paul's epistles to the Thessalonians, and whom St Peter, in his first epistle, styles a faithful brother. St Luke says of them both, that "they were chief men among the brethren," Acts xv. 22. which gives us room to think that they were of the number of the seventy, and might therefore be sent back with Paul and Barnabas to carry the decision of the counsel to Antioch, because Paul and Barnabas, being strenuous asserters of the liberty of the Gospel, might otherwise have been suspected by those of the contrary party, who maintained the necessity of circumcision. *Calmet's Commentary.*

the whole church, to reprove him sharply, for endeavouring to impose that yoke upon the Gentiles, which he, though a Jew, thought himself at liberty to shake off. But how St Peter received this reproof, we are no where told; and this indeed is the last time that we read of him in the history of the Acts. From Acts i.
10. to the end.

It was not long after this, that Paul and Barnabas resolved upon visiting the churches which they had lately planted among the Gentiles. To this end Barnabas proposed to take his cousin Mark with them; which Paul would by no means agree to, because he had deserted them in their former journey; so that, after a warm dispute on both sides, they separated † from each other: Barnabas, with his nephew, betook himself to Cyprus, which was his native country; and Paul (after he had been recommended to the blessing and assistance of God by the prayers of the church) made choice of Silas for his companion, in his intended visitation of the several places where he had propagated Christianity.

Parting from Antioch, he travelled over the provinces of Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches, and leaving with them copies of the synodical decree, which had lately passed in the council at Jerusalem. Thence, very probably, he sailed to Crete †², where he planted Christianity; and having constituted Titus to be the bishop of the place, left him there to regulate such matters as the shortness of his stay would not permit him to do. From Crete he returned to Cilicia, and came to Lystra, where he met with a young man named Timothy, whose father was a Greek †³, but his mother Eunice (from whom he had received all the advantages of a pious education, and an extraordinary skill in the Sacred Writings) was a Jewish convert. Him Paul designed to make the companion of his travels, and a special instrument in the ministry of the Gospel: And therefore, being willing, in indifferent matters, to accommodate himself to the humour of some particular men, he caused him to be circumcised, as knowing very well what a mighty prejudice the want of that rite would have been in the opinion and estimation of the Jews.

From Lystra, Paul, with his companions, passed through Phrygia †⁴ and Gala-

† From hence we may learn, not only that these great lights in the Christian church were men of the like passions with us, but that God, upon this occasion, did most eminently illustrate the wisdom of his Providence, by rendering the frailties of two such eminent servants instrumental to the benefit of his church, since both of them thenceforward employed their extraordinary industry and zeal, singly and apart, which till then had been united, and confined to the same place. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

†² This is one of the noblest isles in the whole Mediterranean Sea, which had once an hundred considerable towns or cities in it, from whence it had the name of Hecatonpolis, and, for the goodness of the soil, and temper of the air, was likewise styled Macarios, or Macarionesus, the *happy island*; for though the inland parts of it are very mountainous, yet are they extremely fruitful, especially of vines called the Muscadine, though not so productive of corn. At present it is commonly called Candia, from its principal town, which bears that name; is situate over against the mouth of the Aegean Sea, or Archipelago; and while it continued in the hands of the Venetians, was an archbishop's see, great, rich, and populous; but since it came into the possession of the Turks (which was in the year 1669), it has lost all marks of

its former happiness and grandeur. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†³ The law of Moses (as Grotius understands it) forbade the Jewish males to marry with women of another religion, but did not forbid a Jewish woman to marry with a Gentile (even as Esther did with Ahasuerus), if so be he was a man of piety and moral honesty. To this purpose he observes, that Ezra, when he went about a reformation in this matter, made enquiry only into those males who had taken strange wives, chap. ix. and x. but none at all into the women who had taken strange husbands. It is certain however from Josephus, that in his days the Jews looked upon both these practices as contrary to the true interpretation of their law, and therefore he calls Drusilla's marriage with Felix a manifest contempt of it. *Antiq. lib. ii. c. 5.* and *Whitby's Annotations.*

†⁴ It is a province of Asia Minor, having Bithynia to the north; Galatia to the east; Lycia to the south; and Mysia to the west. The inhabitants of this country (who are said to have been the inventors of augury, and other kinds of divination) were anciently more superstitious than the other Asiatics, as appears from the rites which they used in the sacrifices of Cybele, and other heathen goddesses. They were noted for their effeminacy and lightness of conversation, as well as for their servile and stupid temper, which gave

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tia †, in which country he was entertained with great kindness and veneration, as if he had been (a) "an angel sent from heaven;" and hence he intended to have continued his progress in the proconsular Asia, but that, by a particular revelation, he was forbidden as yet to preach the Gospel there. Being therefore come to Mysia †², and attempting in vain to go into Bithynia †³, he came to Troas †⁴, where he had a vision, commanding him to direct his course for Macedonia †⁵, and where St Luke seems to have joined him, and for ever after to have been his inseparable companion.

Embarking therefore at Troas, they touched upon the island Samothracia †⁶, and the next day landed at Neapolis †⁷, a port in Macedonia, from whence they travelled a few miles to Philippi †⁸, a Roman colony. A little distant from the city, the Jews

occasion to these proverbs, "serò sapiunt Phryges," and "Phryges plagis fieri solent meliores." *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

† It is a province of Asia Minor, bounded on the west by Phrygia; on the east by the river Halys; on the north by Paphlagonia; and on the south by Lycaonia. It took its name from Galatæ, or the Gauls, who, under their captain Leonorius (as Strabo informs us), left their own country in Europe, and having ranged over Italy and Greece, passed into the Asiatic continent, and brought a great part of it under their command; but being broken by Attalus, king of Pergamus, and driven out of other parts, they were at last confined to this province, where, in a short time, they established their own language, which (as St Jerome informs us, in his commentaries on St Paul's epistle to the Galatians) was in use in his time, and very much like that which the people of Triers, or Treves, in the European Gaul, are known to speak. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table, and Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

(a) Gal. iv. 14.

†² It is a small province of Asia Minor, bounded on the north by Bithynia; on the east by Phrygia; on the west by Troas; and on the south by the river Hermus. It had its name, very probably, from the great quantity of beech trees which grow there; but why its inhabitants came to be accounted base and contemptible, even to a proverb (as Tully, in his oration for Flaccus, has noted), we cannot tell. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table, and Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†³ It is a region of Asia Minor, bounded on the north by the Euxine Sea; on the south by Phrygia; on the west by the Propontis; and on the east by Galatia. It had its name (as most geographers suppose) from one of its kings, named Bithynus; but in what age he reigned they give us no account. However, since the times of the New Testament, it has been made famous for the first general council held at Nice, by the command of Constantine the Great, against the Arian heresy; and for the fourth general council held at Chalcedon, by command of the emperor Martianus, for suppressing the heresy of Nestorius. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table, and Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†⁴ This was a small country belonging to Phrygia Minor, according to Strabo, and lying on the west of Mysia, upon the Hellespont. It took its name from its principal city, which was a sea-port, about four

miles from the situation of old Troy, so famous in the works of Homer. This city was built by Lysimachus, one of Alexander's captains, who peopled it from the neighbouring places, and called it Alexandria, or Troas Alexandri, in honour of his master, who himself indeed began the work, but did not live to bring it to perfection; but in process of time it lost that name, and both city and country was called Troas only. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table, and Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†⁵ This is a large province of Greece, bounded on the North by the mountain of Hemus; on the south by Epirus and Achaia; on the east by the Ægean Sea; and on the west by the Aonian and Adriatic Seas. Its ancient name was Emmathia; but, from the kings of Macedon, it was afterwards called Macedonia, and became famous in all histories, as being the third kingdom which, under Alexander the Great, obtained the empire of the world, and had no less than an hundred and fifty nations under its command. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table.*

†⁶ It is a small island in the Ægean Sea, lying west from Troas, over against the coast of Thrace, from whence it has its name, to distinguish it from the isle Samos, situate over against Ionia. At present it is called Samandrachi, and is said to have more commodious harbours than any other island in this sea. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†⁷ This sea-port, which stood very near to Thrace, belonged at first to that province, but was afterwards taken into Macedonia. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†⁸ This was one of the chief cities of Macedonia, lying to the west of Neapolis, and formerly called Dathos, but afterwards taking its name from Philip, the famous king of Macedon, who repaired and beautified it. In process of time it became a Roman colony; for the Romans (we must know) had two sorts of colonies; such as were founded in places where there had never been a city before, or where a former city had been totally destroyed, and these were peopled with none but Romans; and such as were settled in cities already built, where those who had served in the wars, as well as any other Romans that were willing to remove thither, had such a district of the town assigned for them to inhabit, and such a quantity of ground in the country for them to till and cultivate. Both these kinds of colonies, how far soever distant from Rome, enjoyed the privileges of Roman citizens, and were governed by the Roman

had a Proseuche †, or place of devotion, whither the apostle and his company used to resort, for the exercise of their religion, and the preaching of the Gospel to such as frequented the place. Here they found several devout women, and among others one named Lydia, a dealer in purple, whom, when they had converted, they baptized, as likewise her whole family; and she, in return, gave them an invitation to lodge at her house during the time of their abode in that city.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

As they were going to this place of devotion, they were frequently followed by a maid-servant, who, being actuated by a spirit of divination †², proclaimed them to be (as indeed they were) the || “servants of the Most High God,” and preachers of the way to salvation. But Paul, well knowing that the Christian religion needed not the testimony of Satan to confirm it, commanded the demon, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her. The demon was forced to obey; but immediately raised a storm against the apostles: For when the masters of the maid saw that by this miracle all their prospect of future gain from her divinations was gone, they apprehended Paul and Silas, and having brought them before the magistrates, to them they insinuated, that as they were Jews †³, there was reason to believe that they intended to introduce

laws. Of this latter sort was the city of Philippi, and had this honour conferred on it both by Julius and Augustus Cæsar, very probably, in memory of the two great battles that were fought in the plains adjacent, the former between Julius and Pompey the Great, and the latter between Augustus and Mark Anthony on the one side, and Cassius and Brutus on the other. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table, Calmet's Commentary, and Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

† Because the laws very probably would not permit them to exercise a strange religion within the city. *Whitby's Annotations.*

†² The words in the original are πνεῦμα Πύθωνος. All commentators agree in this, that Python is a spirit which divined or foretold things to come. And they generally conclude, that the most famous Pythoëss in the world was that at the temple of Delphi. In the midst of this temple there was a deep hole or pit, from whence proceeded a vapour that was apt to disturb the understanding. The woman, when she was to foretel any thing, was placed directly over this hole, on a brazen tripos, that so she might receive her “Enthusiasm à secretis,” till being thus filled with the spirit, and retaining in memory the phantasms raised by the agitation of the demon, she pronounced her oracles, and foretold future events to those who came to consult her. Whether the Pythoëss at Philippi was in this manner agitated, we have no manner of account; but certainly the apostle was highly commendable for dispossessing the spirit, since thereby he not only manifested the power of the name of Jesus, but rescued the poor woman likewise from a very troublesome inmate, if so be it affected her, as it is said to have done the Sibyl in Virgil:

Subitò non vultus, non color unus,
Non comptæ mansère comæ, sed pectus anhelum,
Et Rabie fera Corda tument, majorque videri,
Nec mortale sonans, afflata est numine, quando
Jam propiore Dei. *Æneid vi.*
Whitby's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.

|| It may seem a little strange that the devil, who is the father of lies, and had all the reason imaginable to vilify and decry St Paul and his companions, should here be tempted to tell truth in commendation of them; but for this he had his design. He knew full well, that, if the Gentiles should believe the character he gave them, this would invalidate the apostles preaching and miracles, and, by supposing a confederacy between them, make the one be esteemed the effects of magic, and the other no better than the doctrines of devils. He knew, in like manner, that, if the Jews did not believe his testimony concerning the apostles, it would nevertheless leave a bad impression upon their minds, and make them entertain a suspicion of St Paul and his associates, for having the praise and approbation of the prince of darkness; and though this prince of darkness might possibly foresee that St Paul would give him no farther quarter, but instantly dispossess him, yet this might not at all deter him from his purpose, because he did not doubt, but that his ejection would draw upon the apostle and his friends a violent persecution, which was the ultimate of his wish. *Calmet's Commentary.*

†³ At the first appearance of the Christian religion, the Gentiles looked upon it as no other than a particular sect, or reformation of Judaism; because at that time, those who professed it were descended from the same stock, born in the same country, observed, in the main, the same laws, adored the same God, and received the same Scriptures. This was enough to denominate them Jews: And accordingly Suetonius, in his life of Claudius, c. 25. tells us, that the emperor banished all the Jews out of Rome, because they were always raising tumults at the instigation of one Chrestus: (For so he calls our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ) And in like manner, the people of Philippi, to make Paul and Silas more odious to the magistrates, did not stick to acquaint them that they were Jews, and intended some innovations in religion. For though, as yet, there was no express edict against Christians, yet there was an old law of

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a religion and form of worship, contrary to the laws of the Roman empire. Upon this slight occasion, the magistrates ordered them (though unconvicted) to be scourged; and having committed them to close prison, gave the jailor strict charge to keep them safe; who thereupon thrust them into the inner dungeon, and made their feet fast in the stocks. But in vain was all his contrivance. While the apostles at midnight were singing hymns and praises to God, an earthquake suddenly shook the foundations of the prison; the doors flew open, and their chains fell off. The jailor, awakened at the noise, and supposing that the prisoners had made their escape, drew his sword † with an intent to kill himself; but being assured by St Paul to the contrary, he came trembling in; and, having taken the two apostles home to his own house, he washed their wounds, entertained them courteously, and gave such evident proof of his faith and repentance, as not only to be baptized himself, but to make his whole family likewise become proselytes to this persecuted religion.

The magistrates, next morning, reflecting upon what they had done, would have dismissed the apostles privately; but the apostles refused to accept of their discharge, alleging, "That they were not only innocent persons, but denizens †² of Rome; that, as they had been illegally scourged and committed, their delivery should be as public as was the injury, and attended with a solemn retraction of what they had done." The magistrates, when they heard that they insisted on their privileges, were not a little afraid, and therefore repairing to the prison with all submission, desired them to leave the city; which the apostles, after some conference with the converts in Lydia's house, were not averse to do.

From Philippi, Paul and his companions passing through Amphipolis †³ and Apollonia †⁴, came to Thessalonica †⁵, the metropolis of Macedonia, where he disputed in the

the Romans, which required them to worship the gods of their own country only, Tully de Leg. lib. ii. and yet Christianity dissuaded them from this, "For we preach unto you, says St Paul, that ye should turn from these vanities to the living God, who made heaven and earth," Acts xiv. 15. *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Whitby's* Annotations.

† Among the Greeks and Romans both, self-murder was so common a thing, allowed by their philosophers, and practised by most of them, that we need not wonder to find the jailor, for fear of some severer punishment, in a ready disposition to commit it upon himself. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†² Silas might likewise be a Roman citizen; but as St Paul was undoubtedly one, this was enough to justify the language which he uses. The only dispute is, how he came by this privilege? And to this some reply, that the city where he was born, for its faithful adherence to Julius Cæsar, was by him made a Roman colony, and all its inhabitants admitted to the usual rights and immunities of Romans. Others contend, that though Tarsus might, at that time, be made a free town, yet it was never a Roman colony, until the reign either of Caracalla or Heliogabalus; and that therefore the right of a Roman citizen was not common to all the people of the place, but only to some particular persons who might purchase it as a title of honour, for them and their heirs for ever; of whom they suppose St Paul's father to be one, and that upon this foundation, his son might very properly say, that he was born free. However this be, it is certain, that the quality of a Roman citizen was highly esteemed, especially in all Roman colonies, whereof Philippi was one. Every injury offered to

such a one was looked upon as an affront against the majesty of the whole people of Rome: To bind him was a violation of the law, and much more to have him beaten; but to be scourged and bound, without being first legally heard and tried, was not only against the Roman, but against the laws of all nations; and the more public any such injury is, the greater is its aggravation, and the more solemn should its reparation be. *Beausobre's* Annotations, *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Cave's* Lives of the Apostles.

†³ This is a city of Macedonia, lying on the confines of Thrace, and so called because it is encompassed by the river Strymon, the old boundary between these two provinces. *Wells's* Geography of the New Testament.

†⁴ This is another city of Macedonia, lying between Amphipolis and Thessalonica. *Whitby's* Alphabetical Table.

†⁵ This was the metropolis or chief city of Macedonia, whose ancient name was Thesma, from whence the sea it stands upon took its name. Some are of opinion, that, being improved and beautified by Philip, king of Macedon, it was called Thessalonica, in memory of the victory which he obtained over the Thessalians; but Strabo, and some others, rather think that it took its name from Thessalonica, the wife of Cassander, and daughter of Philip. At present it is called Salonichi, and is thought to retain something of its ancient wealth and greatness, having still a safe harbour for the benefit of commerce, and being still an Archbishop's See of the Grecian Church. *Calmet's* Dictionary, and *Wells's* Geography of the New Testament.

synagogues of the Jews three Sabbath-days successively, proving, from the predictions of the Old Testament, that the Messiah was to suffer, and to rise again, and that the blessed Jesus was this Messiah. Great numbers, especially of religious proselytes, and several women of the better rank and quality, were converted at his preaching; but the unbelieving Jews raised a tumult in the city, and went to the house of Jason * where St Paul lodged; but not finding him there, they seized Jason, and carried him before the magistrates, where they accused him of harbouring in his house persons disaffected to the Roman government, and who set up one Jesus in opposition to Cæsar. He, however, upon security for his good behaviour, was dismissed; and Paul and Silas (for fear of greater disturbances) were by the brethren conveyed next night to Beræa †. Here they found the people in a better disposition to entertain the Christian doctrine, but yet not willing to take it merely upon the apostles word, until they had examined the Scriptures, and found that their preaching agreed very well with the characters therein delivered of the Messiah; and then great numbers both of men and women of distinction were converted: But the Jews of Thessalonica, hearing of their success, came down to Beræa, and there raised such disturbances, that the brethren thought proper to send Paul privately away to Athens ‡, while Silas and Timothy continued some time in the place to confirm the new believers, but after that had orders to follow him as soon as possible.

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While Paul waited for his company at Athens, he went about several parts of the city to see the rarities of it, and wherever he came found abundance of superstition †³ and ignorant zeal even for deities that themselves knew nothing of. This therefore he esteemed no improper place and time for him to apply himself to the discharge of his great work; and accordingly he not only disputed with the Jews and proselytes in the synagogues every Sabbath-day, but took all opportunities, wherever he met with a convenient auditory, (and this he seldom missed of in the public forum, where people of all sorts daily resorted to hear and tell news, which was the great business of their lives,) to instruct them in the coming of the Messias, and in the doctrine of a resurrection and a future state.

Athens was, at this time, the great academy of the Roman empire, and abounded with philosophers of all sects; but those whom St Paul had chiefly to deal with were the Epicureans †⁴ and the Stoics, who treated him with a great deal of scorn and con-

* The Greeks say that he was afterwards made Bishop of Tarsus in Cilicia.

† This was likewise another great and populous city of Macedonia, lying to the south of Thessalonica, and almost directly in the way to Athens. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

‡ This was one of the most renowned cities in the world, situate on the gulph of the Ægean Sea, which comes up to the Isthmus of the Peloponese or Morea, in that district of Greece, properly so called, which was named Attica, and was the parent of that dialect which is esteemed the purest and finest Greek. The city itself was the great seat of arts and sciences, and (as Cicero will have it) the fountain whence civility, learning, religion, and laws were derived to all other nations; so universally flocked to by those that had the least kindness for the muses and good manners, that he who had not seen Athens was accounted a block; he, who having seen it, was not in love with it, a dull, stupid ass; and he who, after he had seen it, could be willing to leave it, fit for nothing but to be a pack-horse. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament, and Cave's Lives of the Apostles.*

†³ Several of their own writers have made it their remark, that Athens had greater numbers of deities and idols than all Greece besides; and Strabo, in particular, notes, that the Athenians were not more fond of strangers, than forward to comply with any novelties in religion, and ready to entertain any foreign deities and rites of worship. *Cave's Lives of the Apostles.*

†⁴ These two sects were not only contrary to each other in their tenets, but strangely averse to the Christian religion, both in their principles and practices. The Epicureans were so, because they found their pleasures and jovial humour, and their loose and exorbitant course of life (consequent upon their disbelief of a God, a Providence, and a future state) so much checked and controlled by the strict and severe precepts of Christ; and because Christianity so plainly and positively asserted a Divine Providence, the subsistence of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and state of rewards and punishments after death, which they absolutely denied. The Stoics, on the other hand, though pretending to principles of great and uncommon rigour and severity, and such

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tempt, while others looked upon him as a setter up of new gods, (supposing Jesus and Anastasis, or the resurrection, which he preached, to be two new and unheard-of deities), and therefore brought him before their famous senate at Areopagus †. Here, in a most excellent discourse, he endeavoured to convince them of their present errors and delusions, and to inform them who that true God was, whom they, under false notions, blindly worshipped. "The Deity to whom they had dedicated an altar, under the title of the 'Unknown God †²,' was no other (he told them) than the

as had the nearest affinity to the Christian religion, yet found themselves aggrieved with it. For (besides their doctrine of fate, which they made superior to their Jupiter) that meek and humble temper of mind, that modesty and self-denial, which the Gospel so earnestly recommended, was so directly contrary to the immoderate pride and haughtiness of that sect, who were not ashamed to make their wise man equal, and in some things exceed God himself, that it is no wonder we find them treating a preacher of such doctrines with slight and disdain, "What will this babbler say?" Acts xvii. 18. *Cave's Lives of the Apostles.*

† This was a place in Athens where the senate usually assembled, and took its name (as some think) from *ἄγος*, which is the same as *Mars*, the god of war, who was the first person that was judged here for having killed Apollo's son: But as *ἄγος* does sometimes signify *fighting, murder, or violence* of any kind, and *παρίς* is properly a *rock, or rising hill*, it therefore seems to denote a court, situated upon an eminence, (as the Areopagus was) where causes of murder, &c. were tried. This court, at present, is out of the city, but in former times it stood almost in the middle of it. Its foundations, which are still standing, are built with square stones of a prodigious size, in the form of a semicircle, and support a terrace or platform, of about an hundred and forty paces, which was the court where this senate was held. In the midst of it there was a tribunal cut in a rock, and all about were seats, cut likewise in stone, where the senate heard causes in the open air, without any covering, and (as some say) in the night-time, that they might not be moved to compassion at the sight of any criminal that was brought before them. For this judicature was so famous for its uprightness, and held by all in such esteem and veneration, that when the Romans had conquered Greece, and sent their proconsuls to rule there, it was no uncommon thing for them to refer difficult causes to the judgment of the Areopagites. After the loss of their liberty, however, the authority of this senate (which used before to determine in all causes, both civil and religious) declined apace, so that, in our apostle's time, the Areopagus was not so much a court of judicature as a common rendezvous, where all curious and inquisitive persons, who "spent their time in nothing else but either in hearing or telling some new thing," were accustomed to meet, Acts xvii. 21. But though their power, in other matters, was greatly impaired, yet they seem still to have retained the privilege of canonizing all gods that were allowed public worship; and therefore St Paul was brought before them as an

asserter and preacher of such a Deity as they had not yet admitted among them. [It does not appear, however, that he was brought before them as a criminal, but merely as a man who had a new worship to propose to a people religious above all others, but who took care that no strange worship should be received on the footing of a *tolerated religion*, till it had the approbation of the court appointed to judge of such matters. The address of the court to him—"May we know what this doctrine is whereof thou speakest?"—implies rather a request to a teacher, than an interrogatory to a criminal; and accordingly his reply hath not the least air of an *apology* suiting a person accused, but is one continued information of important truths, such as it became a teacher or benefactor, rather than a person arraigned for a crime, to give. He was therefore neither acquitted nor condemned, but dismissed as a man *coram non judice*. We are indeed told, that when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter, putting off the audience to an indefinite time; so that nothing was left him but to depart, and according to his Master's direction "shake the dust from off his feet."] *Calmet's Commentary; Beausobre's and Hammond's Annotations, and Warburton's Div. Leg.*

†² That the Athenians, in their public places, had altars without any names on them, and others inscribed to unknown gods, or demons, is evident from the testimony of Laërtius, who informs us, that when a great plague raged at Athens, and several means had been attempted for the removal of it, they were advised by Epimenides the philosopher to build an altar and dedicate it τῷ προστάκοντι θεῷ, *to the proper and peculiar God, to whom sacrifices were due*. In *Vita Epimen.* lib. xi. And the Athenians (as St Chrysostom supposes), not knowing by what name to call him, erected an altar with this inscription, ΘΕΟΙΣ ΑΣΙΑΣ, ΚΑΙ ΕΥΡΩΠΗΣ, ΚΑΙ ΛΙΒΥΗΣ; ΘΕΩ ΑΓΝΩΣΤΩ ΚΙΑ ΞΕΝΩ: "To the gods of Asia, Europe, and Africa; to the strange and unknown God;" whereby (as some imagine) the Athenians intended the God of the Jews, who had given such wonderful deliverances to his own people. Nor is this conjecture unreasonable, considering, that the writings of Plato, Pythagoras, and many others, are a plain proof, that the Scriptures had been read by their philosophers, though not being able to comprehend his Divine nature and attributes, they might call him "the unknown God," in conformity perhaps to the Hebrews themselves, who had the name of their God in great secrecy and veneration, and, from the mouth of the prophet, had received it as one of his

Great God, the Creator of all things, the Supreme Governor and Ruler of the world; that as he was infinite in all perfections, it was not to be supposed that he could be confined within any temple or human fabric; that any image could be made to represent him, or that he could stand in need of their gifts or sacrifices, who is the sole fountain of all the blessings they enjoyed; that it was entirely from him that they had either life, motion, or existence, as one of their own poets, by calling them his offspring, acknowledged; and therefore incongruous it was to think that their Creator could be the work of their hands, as every image of gold, silver, or stone was; that though his Divine patience had, for a long time, borne with mens blind idolatries, yet now he expected a general repentance and reformation from the world, especially since, by the publication of the Gospel, he had fully evidenced a future judgment, had appointed the holy Jesus to administer that judgment, and given us sufficient assurance of such his appointment by having raised him from the dead." But no sooner had he mentioned the resurrection, than some of the philosophers †² mocked and derided him, whilst others †³ expressed their desire to hear him upon the same subject another time: And the good effect of his discourse was, that it converted several of the best rank and quality, among whom was Dionysius, †⁴ one of the senators of the Areopagus, and Damaris, whom the ancients, not improbably, account his wife.

From Athens St Paul departed to Corinth, †⁵ where he found a certain Jew, named

distinguished titles, "Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour," Isa. xlv. 15. *Hammond's* Annotations, and *Cave's* Lives of the Apostles.

† The poet whom St Paul means was Aratus, born in Cilicia, and consequently his countryman; and what he attributes to Jupiter, the apostle applies to the true God: "We are his offspring." This indeed was no argument to the Epicurean auditors, who held the poets in great contempt, because on all occasions they introduced the gods, and taught the separate existence of human souls; but it was of great weight to the common people, who paid a mighty veneration to the poets, from whose works some of the greatest philosophers then living were wont to borrow citations, thereby to confirm and adorn their discourses. To the honour of human learning therefore, we may observe, that in the New Testament, the Holy Ghost is pleased three several times to make mention of the heathen poets; of Aratus here, Acts xvii. 2. 8. of Menander, 1 Cor. xv. 33. and of Epimenides. *Beausobre's* and *Burkitt's* Annotations, and *Bentley's* Sermons at Boyle's Lectures.

†² These were the Epicureans, who believed no resurrection, no immortality of the soul, nor any future judgment, which St Paul here asserts. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†³ These were the Stoics, who maintained a conflagration and reviviscence of the world; held that souls might live long, though not always, in another state; and allowed something of future recompences, though with great fluctuation. *Whitby's* Annotations.

†⁴ He is said in his youth to have been bred at Athens, in all the learned arts and sciences, and at the years of five and twenty, to have travelled into Egypt, there to perfect himself in the study of astronomy, for which that nation had the renown. When our Saviour died, he was at Heliopolis, where, ob-

serving the miraculous darkness that attended his passion, he broke out into this expression,—“That certainly, at that time, either God himself suffered, or was much concerned for somebody that did.” Returning to Athens, he became one of the senators of the Areopagus; disputed with St Paul, and by him was converted, instructed, and consecrated Bishop of Athens; where having laboured much in the defence and propagation of the Gospel, and suffered a great deal in that cause, he crowned his life and confession with a glorious martyrdom, being burnt to death at Athens, in the 93d year of Christ. *Cave's* Lives of the Apostles, *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, and *Calmet's* Dictionary under the word,

†⁵ Corinth, which was anciently called Epyrus, was the capital of Achaia, and had its name from one Corinthus, who took and rebuilt it. Its situation, which is on the bottom of the Isthmus, or neck of the land which joins Peloponnesus, or the Morea, to the main continent, made it capable of commanding all Greece; but its inhabitants living upon two seas, which drew the trade both of the East and West from all parts, were chiefly given to commerce, which procured them abundance of wealth; but then this wealth produced pride, ostentation, effeminacy, and all manner of vice in them. Lasciviousness, in particular, was not only tolerated here, but in some sort consecrated by the worship of Venus, and the public prostitution of those who were devoted to her. Here lived that famous, or rather infamous whore, Thais, who exacted ten thousand drachmas for one night's lodging, which made Demosthenes cry out, “Nolo tanti emere pœnitentiam!” i. e. “I will not purchase what I must repent of at so dear a rate.” But what this city was most memorable for among heathen authors was its citadel, which was called Acro-corinthus, from its being built on an high mountain, or rock, and for its insolence against the Roman legates which made L. Mummius destroy it; but in its con-

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Aquila, † lately come from Italy, with Priscilla his wife, because the emperor Claudius, towards the latter end of his reign, had made an edict †² to banish all the Jews from Rome; and, having instructed them in the Christian faith, he took up his lodgings, and wrought with them, (for they by profession were tent-makers †³ as well as himself), and every Sabbath-day he preached in the synagogues, labouring to convince both Jews and Greeks that Jesus was the true Messias.

Before Paul departed from Athens, Timothy, according to his request, came to him from Beræa, and brought him an account, (a) that the new Christians at Thessalonica had been under great persecution ever since he left them. This obliged Paul to send him back again into Macedonia, in order to establish and comfort the brethren under their afflictions; which when Timothy had done, he took Silas along with him, and returned from Thessalonica with the joyful news of the stedfast adherence to the truth which that church had shewn in all its distresses. This was a matter of no small consolation to the apostle, who thereupon wrote his first epistle to the Thessalonians: (b) “Wherein he highly applauds their courage and zeal in the belief of the Christian religion, and exhorts them to a noble constancy and perseverance amidst their afflictions: Wherein he commends their charity to the believers of Macedonia, and gives them many instructions concerning a good life and conversation: Wherein he exhorts them to the practice of all purity and holiness, especially in the use of the marriage-bed; to avoid idleness; to be diligent in their callings, and not immoderate in their grief for the dead; and wherein he instructs them in the doctrine of the resurrection, the manner of Christ’s coming to judgment, and the obligation all were under to make a timely preparation for it.”

Upon the accession of Timothy and Silas, St Paul preached the doctrine of Christ with fresh ardour to the Jews; but when he perceived, that instead of attending to it, they only opposed it with blasphemous and opprobrious language, he openly declared

flagration, so many statues of different metals were melted down, that the remains of them made the famous Corinthian brass, which was accounted more valuable than either gold or silver. After this destruction it was restored by Julius Cæsar to its former splendour, and in a short time became the most beautiful city of all Greece, insomuch, that the neat order of pillars which are used at this day, in the decoration of all fine buildings, took from this place the name of Corinthian pillars. *Whitby’s Alphabetical Table*, *Calmet’s Commentary*, and *Wells’s Geography* of the New Testament.

† Aquila was a native of Pontus, in Asia Minor, and together with his wife Priscilla, (who is sometimes called Prisca) was made a convert to the Christian religion by St Paul at Antioch. When the apostle left that city in order to return to Jerusalem, these two persons accompanied him as far as Ephesus, where he left them for some time to preach the Gospel, and, by their example and instruction, to confirm the faithful in that church. Here it was that they did him singular service, and for his life laid down their own necks, as himself acknowledges, Rom. xvi. 4. When he wrote his epistle to the Romans, they were returned to Rome, because he therein salutes them with great commendations; but when he wrote his second epistle to Timothy, they were come back to Ephesus; because in it he desires him to salute them in his name, 2 Tim. iv. 19. What became of them after this, we have no certain account, but it

is supposed that they continued at Ephesus until the time of their death, which, according to the Roman martyrologies, is set down on the eighth of July. *Calmet’s Commentary and Dictionary*.

†² Suetonius, in his life of Claudius, makes the occasion of this decree to have been the tumults which the Jews (or Christians, who went under the notion of Jews) were perpetually fomenting in Rome: but as we find nothing of this in any other historian, it is rather supposed, that this severity proceeded from the behaviour of some thieves in Judea, who had assaulted a servant of the emperor’s, named Stephen, taken from him the imperial baggage, and killed the Roman troops, that were appointed to guard it; as both Tacitus, in his annals, lib. xii. and Josephus, in his History of the Jewish wars, lib. ii. have informed us. *Whitby’s Annotations*.

†³ It was a received custom among the Jews, for every man, of what rank or quality soever, to learn some handicraft; for one of their proverbial expressions is, that “whoever teaches not his son a trade, teaches him to be a thief:” And in those hot countries, where tents (which were commonly made of skins, or leather, sewed together, to keep out the violence of the weather) were used, not only by soldiers, but by travellers, and others, whose business required them to be abroad, a tent-maker was no mean or unprofitable employment. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, and *Pool’s Annotations*.

(a) 1 Thess. iii. 1, &c. (b) *Ibid.* passim.

his rejection of them, and purpose of applying himself to the Gentiles †. However, before he did this, some persons of distinction among them, such as Crispus †², the chief ruler of the synagogue, and Stephanus and Gaius, together with their whole families, had embraced the doctrine of the Gospel, and were baptized into the Christian faith. Among the Gentiles, he made a multitude of converts; and by a vision from heaven, being encouraged to proceed in his ministry with boldness, under the Divine protection, and in certain hopes of success, he there continued for the space of one whole year and six months.

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During his stay in this place the Jews made a general insurrection against him, and brought him before Gallio †³; who at that time was proconsul of Achaia, accusing him of attempting to introduce a new religion, contrary to what was established by the Jewish law, and permitted by the Roman powers. But as Gallio apprehended that this was a controversy, which fell not under the cognisance of the civil judicature, he would have no concern in it, and therefore ordered his officers to drive them out of the court: whereupon the common people took Sosthenes †⁴, a ruler of the synagogue, and one of St Paul's chief accusers, and beat him publicly before the tribunal; but this gave the proconsul no disturbance.

After this tumult was over, St Paul continued some time in Corinth, and before his departure thence wrote his second epistle to the Thessalonians: (a) "Wherein he endeavours to confirm their minds in the faith, and to animate them courageously to endure persecution from the unbelieving Jews, a lost and undone race of men, whom the Divine vengeance was ready to overtake: wherein he rectifies the misinterpretation which false teachers had made of some passages in his former epistle, relating to the

† His words are, "From henceforth I will turn to the Gentiles, Acts xviii. 6. and these at first sight seem to be a declaration, that he would leave off preaching to the Jews, wherever he came, and wholly apply himself to the conversion of the Gentiles; but by comparing his actions with the places where this phrase, or something like it, does occur, it appears, that he only intended to say, he would no longer preach to the Jews of that place; for after this is said, we find him still entering into the synagogues, and preaching to the Jews, and calling upon them to hear the word, Acts xv. 8. and xxviii. 23, &c. *Whitby's Annotations.*

†² Crispus is said to have been made by St Paul bishop of Ægina, an island near Athens; and Origen makes mention of one Gaius, a disciple of St Paul, who by him was appointed bishop of Thessalonica; but of Stephanus we have no other account than what we learn from the Acts of the Apostles. *Calmet's Dictionary.*

†³ The name of this proconsul was once Marcus Annæus Novatus, but being adopted by Lucius Junius Gallio, he took the name of his adoptive father, and was brother to the famous Seneca, tutor to Nero. To him it is that that philosopher dedicates his book *De Vitâ Beatâ*; and of him the Roman historians give us the character, that he was a man of sweet temper and disposition, an enemy to all vice, and particularly a hater of flattery. He was twice made proconsul of Achaia; first by Claudius, and afterwards by Nero; but as he partook of his brother's prosperity when he was in favour at court, so was he a sharer in his misfortunes when he fell under Nero's displeasure, and at length was put to death by the tyrant, as well as

his brother. *Calmet's Commentary, Pool's and Beausobre's Annotations.*

†⁴ Crispus, we read, was ruler of the synagogue at Corinth; and therefore we may suppose, either that there were more synagogues in that city than one, or that there might be several rulers in one and the same synagogue; or that Crispus, after his conversion to Christianity, might be succeeded in that office by Sosthenes; but then we are at a loss to know who the people were that thus beat and misused him. The Greek printed copies tell us, that they were the Gentiles; and those who read the text thus, imagine, that when they perceived the neglect and disregard wherewith the proconsul received the Jews, they, to insult them the more, fell foul upon the ruler of their synagogue who was at their head, whether out of hatred to them, or friendship to St Paul, it makes no matter. But others think, that Sosthenes, however head of the synagogue, might be a secret friend and disciple of St Paul, and that the other Jews, seeing themselves neglected by Gallio, might vent their malice upon him; for they suppose that this was the same Sosthenes, whose name St Paul, in the beginning of his first epistle to the Corinthians, written about three years after this scuffle happened at Corinth, joins with his own. It must be owned however, that this opinion was not universally received, since, in the time of Eusebius, it was thought that the Sosthenes mentioned in the epistle, was one of the LXX disciples, and consequently could not be the chief of the synagogue of Corinth twenty years after the death of Jesus Christ. *Beausobre's Annotations, Calmet's Commentary and Dictionary.*

(a) 2 Thess. passim.

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day of judgment, as if it were just at hand, and shews what events (especially that of the coming and destruction of the man of sin) must precede the approach of that day; and wherein, having craved their prayers in his behalf, and made his request to God in theirs, he concludes with divers precepts, especially to shun idleness and ill company, and "not to be weary in well-doing."

Having thus planted the church of Corinth, St Paul resolved to return into Syria, and, taking along with him Aquila and Priscilla from Cenchrea (the port or road for ships in the Archipelago, belonging to Corinth), he sailed to Ephesus †, where he preached a while in the synagogue of the Jews; but being resolved to be at Jerusalem at the passover, he could not be persuaded to stay longer. Leaving therefore Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus, and promising (if God would permit) to return to them again, he set sail for Cæsarea in Palestine, and from thence proceeded to Jerusalem. After he had visited the church, and kept the feast, he went down to Antioch; and having there stayed some time, he traversed the countries of Galatia and Phrygia, confirming, as he went along, the new converted Christians, and so returned to Ephesus.

In his absence, Apollos, a Jew of Alexandria, eminent for his eloquence and great knowledge of the Old Testament, came to Ephesus, and though he was only initiated by the baptism of John ‖, yet being by Aquila and Priscilla more fully instructed in the

† Ephesus, the metropolis and principal mart of the proconsular Asia, is situated upon the river Cayster, and on the side of a hill, which, toward the west, has the prospect of a lovely plain, watered and beautified with the pleasant circles of the river, turning and winding in so many curious mazes, that some travellers have mistaken it for the Meander, and this the rather, because the Turks gave it the name of the Lesser Mendres. Among heathen authors this city was once much celebrated for its famous temple of Diana, which, for its largeness and workmanship, was accounted one of the seven wonders of the world. It is said to have been 425 feet long, 220 broad, and to have been supported by 127 pillars of marble, 70 feet high, whereof 27 were most curiously wrought, and all the rest polished. One Ctesiphon, a famous architect in his time, contrived the model of it, and that with so much art and curiosity, that it took up two hundred years before it was finished, even though it was built at the common charge of all Asia properly so called. After it was finished, it was seven times set on fire; but once more especially, on the very same day that Socrates was poisoned, 400 years before Christ; and at another time (when Erostratus fired it only to get himself a name), on the same night that Alexander the Great was born. It was rebuilt, however, and beautified by the Ephesians, to which work the ladies of Ephesus contributed very largely. In the time of our apostle, it retained a great deal of its former grandeur; but at present it is only an heap of ruins, and the very place where it once stood is so little known, that it affords matter of various conjecture to travellers. The only two buildings worth observation are a strong and lofty castle, situated on an eminence, and a beautiful church, honoured with the name of St John, but now converted into a Turkish mosque. All the rest of the place is the habitation of herdsmen and farmers, who live in low and humble cottages of dirt, covered on the top with earth, and sheltered from the extremity of the weather by migh-

ty masses of ruinous walls, the pride and ostentation of former days, and in these the emblem of the frailty of the world, and the transient vanity of human glory. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table*, and *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*.

‖ The account which St Paul gives us of the baptism of John, our Saviour's forerunner, is this.—"John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying to the people, that they should believe on him who should come after him," i. e. on Jesus Christ, Acts xix. 4. And herein he discovers a wide difference between the baptism of John and that of Jesus Christ, viz. that the baptism of John was a solemn rite of renouncing sins, and profession of obedience for the future; that it opened a way for a more perfect institution of the like nature, and exhibited Christ as the object of faith, and the Master and Guide which men ought to follow. For being thus baptized, they were thereby led and consigned over to him, and qualified for the Christian baptism, which vastly exceeds the other both in dignity and efficacy. For here the Spirit accompanies the water: This confirms and completes that pardon of sins, and those assistances of grace, which belonged to no other washings, farther than as they were approaches to the Christian, which is therefore, by way of distinction and eminence, styled the "washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost," Tit. iii. 5. But if the baptism of John was so imperfect, how came it to pass that, even twenty years after our Lord's ascension, this Apollos should have no knowledge of any other? Or, being so well acquainted with the doctrine of Christ, to be able to teach others, how could he be ignorant of the necessity of his baptism? Now the only reply to this is,—That Apollos might be one of those Jews, who, having received the baptism of John, some two or three and twenty years before, might, soon after that, or before the miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost on the apostles at the day of Pentecost, remove from Judea to Alexandria, where, having not yet seen any

rudiments of the Christian religion, and baptized, he taught the word of God with great boldness, and a most powerful zeal. After some stay in Ephesus, he obtained commendatory letters † from the brethren, and with them went over to Corinth, where he proved highly serviceable, and (a) watered what St Paul had before planted, confirming the disciples, and convincing the Jews, that Jesus was the true and only Messias promised in the Holy Scriptures.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

At St Paul's return to Ephesus, he found several disciples, as well as Apollos, who had received no more than the baptism of John, and had never once heard of the gifts of the Holy Ghost: However, when they were sufficiently instructed in the principles of Christianity, and solemnly admitted to Christian baptism, upon the imposition of the apostle's hands, they immediately received the Holy Ghost, in the gift of tongues, prophecy, and other miraculous powers that were conferred on them. For three months after this, St Paul went into the synagogues, and preached to the Jews, endeavouring, with much earnestness, to convince them that Jesus Christ was the true Messiah; but when, instead of success, he met with nothing but refractoriness and infidelity, he left the synagogues, and for the space of two years instructed the heathen converts, as well as all others, who resorted to him in the school of one Tyrannus †². By this means all the inhabitants of the proconsular Asia had an opportunity of having the Gospel preached to them, and of seeing it confirmed by miracles of an extraordinary nature, which St Paul was enabled to do; insomuch, that if napkins or handkerchiefs were but touched by him, and applied to those who were any ways sick, or possessed with devils, they immediately received cure.

Seven brothers, the sons of one Sceva, a Jewish priest, who travelled from town to town to cure diseases, and cast out devils by their exorcisms †³, observing with what-

of the Gospel histories that might possibly be published at this time, nor had an opportunity of conversing with any of the apostles, to gain farther information, he acquiesced in the baptism he had received, until he came to understand better. St Chrysostom indeed supposes (Hom. 40.) that God vouchsafed him, as he did Cornelius, the baptism of the Spirit, which supplied the want of external baptism, both as an encouragement and a recompence for his zeal in preaching the Gospel: [but this cannot be admitted, for the baptism of the Spirit did not supersede external baptism in the case of Cornelius himself; and therefore it is reasonable to conclude, that Apollos received regular Christian baptism, though it is not mentioned in the concise History of the Acts of the Apostles.] What became of this great preacher, after his return from Corinth to Ephesus, we have no manner of account, unless we may credit what St Jerom tells us of him, viz, that being dissatisfied with the division which his preaching at Corinth had occasioned, 1 Cor. iii. 7. he retired into Crete with Zena, a doctor of the law; but that after St Paul, by his letter, had appeased that dissention, he returned again to Corinth, and was made bishop of that city. Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, and Calmet's Commentary.

† That commendatory epistles, certifying the piety and orthodoxy of the person to whom they were given, and recommending him to an hospitable reception in the places which he travelled to, were an ancient custom in the primitive church, is evident from the testimony of several fathers, and other ecclesiastical writers; but whether they took their rise from Tesseræ Hospitalitatis among the heathens, or from the Jews, among whom the same custom prevailed,

is a point wherein the learned are not agreed. Hammond's and Whitby's Annotations.

(a) 1 Cor. iii. 6.

†² Among the Jews there were two kinds of schools wherein the law was taught, private and public. Their private schools were those wherein a doctor of the law entertained his scholars, and were usually stiled houses of learning. Their public schools were those where their consistories sat to resolve all difficulties and differences of the law: But it seems most likely that the Tyrannus, who lent St Paul his school to preach in, was not a Jew, but a Gentile; not a doctor of the law, but some philosopher or public professor of rhetoric, whom the apostle had converted; because, when he "departed from the Jews, and separated the disciples," Acts xix. 9. it is reasonable to think, that the place made use of for their instruction should appertain to a Gentile rather than a Jew. Howell's Annot.

†³ The word comes from the Greek ἐξορκίζω, which signifies to adjure, or to use the name of God, with a design to drive devils out of places and bodies which they possess. And that the Jews had several incantations in use and veneration, which they had in greater credit, because of an opinion common among them, that they had been invented by Solomon, is evident from the testimony of Josephus. That, even in our Saviour's time, exorcists were very frequent among them, is manifest from these words of his, "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges," Matth. xii. 27. And that they practised their exorcisms sometimes with success, is plain from the acknowledgment of Irenæus, who says, "All things are subject to the Most High, and by invocation of

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facility St Paul effected his miraculous cures and dispossessions, attempted themselves to do the like, and, to add greater force to their charms, presumed to change their form †, by invoking the name of Jesus over a demoniac: But here it pleased God to put a visible difference between those that applied this powerful name regularly, and with commission, and others who, of their own heads, and for ill designs, dared to usurp it: For the demoniac, falling upon the exorcists, tore off their clothes, wounded their bodies, and scarce suffered them to escape with their lives. This was an event which, when the Jews and Gentiles in Ephesus came to know it, filled them with such a reverential fear, that none dared to mention the name of Jesus but with a profound respect; and that many who had addicted themselves to the study of magic †², came and confessed their sins, and publicly burnt their books †³, which amounted to the value of above fifteen hundred pounds in our money. So prevalent was the Gospel of God in these parts!

While St Paul was thus diligently pursuing his ministry, St Peter was preaching the Gospel to the Jews in several provinces of the Lesser Asia, and so, travelling eastward, came at length to the ancient city of Babylon †⁴ in Chaldea, from whence he wrote his first epistle, which is called a catholic or general epistle, to the converted Jews that were of the dispersion; and, “after solemn thanksgiving to God for their call to Christianity, whereby they had obtained a lively hope of an eternal inheritance in heaven, he advises them to the practice of several virtues, as a means to make their ‘calling and election sure,’ viz. That they should live in a constant worship, and fear of God, and imitate their Master, Jesus Christ, in holiness and purity; that they should be diligent hearers of the Gospel, and grow up to perfection by it; that they should lead exemplary lives among the Gentiles, abstaining from carnal lusts, and behaving themselves with modesty, thereby to convince their enemies that calumnies were unreasonable; that they should behave themselves well under their respective relations, submitting themselves to their governors, whether supreme or subordinate; that servants should obey their masters, wives be subject to their husbands, and husbands honour

his name, even before the advent of our Lord, men were saved from evil spirits, and all kinds of demons.” *Calmet’s Dictionary and Commentary*, on Acts xix. 13, and *Whitby* and *Grotius* on Matth. xii. 27.

† Their common form of incantation was, in the “name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

†² Ephesus, above all other places in the world, was noted of old for the study of magic, and all secret and hidden arts, insomuch that the Ἐφεσίου γράμματα, or Ephesian letters, so often spoken of by the ancients (which were certain obscure and mystical spells and charms, whereby they endeavoured to heal diseases, and drive away evil spirits), seem to have been first invented in this city. *Cave’s Lives of the Apostles*.

†³ Though these books were of great value, yet we find they did not sell them, because they would not be gainers by these wicked arts, nor would they contribute, by selling them, to the teaching of others the same arts; but they rightly adjudged them to the flames, to which they were condemned before by the laws of the empire: For they prohibited any to keep books of magic, and where any such were found, ordered that their goods should be forfeited, the books publicly burnt, the persons banished, and (if of meaner rank) beheaded. *Whitby’s Annotations*, and *Cave’s Lives of the Apostles*.

†⁴ Those who take Babylon in a mystical sense,

understand by it Rome, from whence they suppose that St Peter wrote this epistle, not long after his coming thither; and for the confirmation of this, they tell us, that St John, in his book of Revelations, calls Rome by the name of Babylon, either from its conformity in power and greatness to that ancient city, or from its resemblance of it in idolatry, and oppression of God’s people. Others, who still take it in a figurative sense, by Babylon had rather understand Jerusalem, no longer now the Holy City, say they, but a kind of spiritual Babylon, in which the church of God did, at this time, groan under great servitude and captivity; and to support this notion of the word, they produce the authority of some fathers, who understood that of the prophet, “We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed,” in this sense, Jer. li. 9. But as a mystical and figurative sense does not so well agree with the date of a letter, and to conceal the place from whence they wrote, was never the practice of any of the apostles, it is more natural to understand it of Babylon properly so called, though whether it was Babylon in Egypt, where St Peter might preach the Gospel, or Babylon the ancient metropolis of Assyria, where, ever since the time of their captivity, great numbers of Jews were settled, we leave the inquisitive reader to determine. *Cave’s Lives of the Apostles*, and *Beausobre’s Preface sur la 1 Epître de St Pierre*.

their wives; that they should all love one another fervently, and unfeignedly, bear afflictions patiently, live in union, and sympathize with each other in their afflictions; and lastly, that the ministers and pastors of the several churches should take special care of the flocks committed to their charge, teach them diligently, and govern them gently, not seeking their own gain and profit, but the salvation of the people's souls." This is the purport of the epistle, and the whole is written with a fervour and zeal not unbecoming so great an apostle. But to proceed with St Paul.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

After a stay of above two years in Ephesus, he determined to return into Macedonia and Achaia, and having wintered in Corinth, to pass thence to Jerusalem, where he proposed to celebrate the feast of Pentecost, and after that, to proceed in his long intended journey to Rome. In pursuance to this design, he sent Timothy and Erastus † before him into Macedonia, but himself stayed behind at Ephesus, very probably to answer a letter which Apollos and some other brethren had brought him from the church of Corinth, desiring his resolution of several points relating to marriage and chastity, and some other subjects. The Corinthians were, at this time, unhappily divided into parties and factions upon account of their teachers, each one preferring the person from whom he had received his instruction, and disparaging the rest. They committed great disorders in their love-feasts ‡, and celebrated the Holy Sacrament very irreverently. They were addicted to fornication, and one, in particular, had run into incest, in marrying his father's wife. They were unjust and fraudulent in their dealings; they went to law at heathen tribunals; and among them were found some who were bold and profligate enough to deny the resurrection. In opposition to all this, the apostle (in what is called his †st first epistle to the Corinthians) "shews the equality of Christ's ministers*", and their insufficiency for the work to which they are ordained, without the

† Erastus was very probably born at Corinth, and, as the apostle informs us, was made chamberlain of that city, Rom. xvi. 23. but being converted by St Paul, and resolving to pursue his fortune, he resigned his employment, followed him all along, until his last voyage to Corinth, in the way to Rome, where the apostle suffered martyrdom. The Latin writers say, that St Paul left Erastus in Macedonia; that he made him bishop of that province, and that he died a martyr at Philippi: but the Greeks, in their calendars, make him bishop of Paneas, near the sources of the river Jordan, give him the title of an apostle, place him in the number of the seventy disciples, and say that he died in peace, after having gone over all the earth, preaching the faith of Jesus Christ: But not any of these produce one proof of what they say. *Cabnet's Commentary.*

‡ These feasts of charity which were in use among the primitive christians, in memory of the last supper which our blessed Saviour had with his apostles, when he instituted the holy Eucharist, were kept in the church towards the evening, after the common prayers were over, and the word of salvation had been heard. When this was done, the whole congregation ate together what every one had brought with him, in great simplicity and union, so that there was no distinction between rich and poor; and after a frugal and modest supper, they partook of the Sacrament, and gave each other a kiss of peace, and so departed. But this custom, as good and laudable as it was in its original, came, in a short time, to be abused. *Cabnet's Dictionary* under the word *Agape*.

† That this was an epistle written by St Paul the

apostle, as is asserted in the first verse, was never once doubted in the church of God; but whether it was his first epistle to the Corinthians, has been a matter of dispute; because he says in it, "I have written to you an epistle," chap. v. 9. which seems plainly to relate to a former epistle. But as none of the ancients ever ascribed to St Paul more than fourteen epistles, even including that to the Hebrews, no Christian writer ever cited any thing from an epistle of his to the Corinthians supposed to be lost; and all the Greek Scholiasts declare, that the apostle, in these words, speaketh not of another, but of this very epistle, the words *ἔγραψα ὑμῖν*, which we translate "I wrote," should rather be rendered "I had written," (it being a common observation of grammarians, that the Aorist is so called, because it is of an indefinite signification, sometimes used for the perfect, and sometimes for the plusquam perfect tense, "I had written") but made some alteration in my letter before I sent it. *Whitby's Preface* to the first Epistle to the Corinthians.

* [St Paul certainly says nothing, in the place referred to, of either the equality or inequality of Christ's ministers. His object is to shew that they are all indeed *ministers* of Christ; that the doctrine which they preached was not their own; and that the Corinthians ought not to call themselves either by the name of Paul, or by that of Apollos, or by that of Cephas or Peter, since the religion which they professed, by whomsoever they had been taught it, was the religion of Christ, not of man. He considers their teachers as the mere disciples of Christ, though he seems to assume some kind of superiority

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Divine assistance ; orders the incestuous person to be excommunicated, lest his example should infect others ; blames their litigious law-suits, as thinking it much better to refer their differences to some of their own body ; propounds the first institution of the sacrament, and a previous examination of their lives, to bring them to a right use of it ; answers their questions relating to marriage, celibacy, and meats offered to idols ; and having added several things concerning a decent behaviour, both of men and women in their churches ; concerning the gifts of the Holy Ghost ; the excellency of charity ; the gift of tongues, and prayer in an unknown language ; he proves the truth of the Gospel, and the certainty of a future resurrection, almost to a demonstration."

About the same time it was that St Paul, in like manner, wrote his epistle to the Galatians † : For being informed that, since his departure, several impostors had crept in among them, who strongly insisted on the necessity of circumcision, and other legal rites, and greatly disparaged his authority, as being but a second-hand apostle, in comparison of Peter, James, and John, from whom they pretended to derive their instructions ; in this epistle " he reproves them with some necessary warmth and severity, for suffering themselves so easily to be imposed upon by crafty artifices of seducers. He largely refutes those Judaical opinions wherewith they were infected, and, by several arguments, proves, that the slavery of the law brought a curse with it ; was destructive of their Christian liberty, and incapable of procuring their justification in the sight of God. Among these reproofs and arguments, however, he mingles several exhortations full of paternal and apostolic charity ; and, towards the conclusion, gives them many excellent rules and directions for the conduct of their lives and conversations."

A little before St Paul's departure from Ephesus, one Demetrius, a silver-smith, who dealt in making little models †² of the temple of Ephesus, with the image Diana in-

over Apollos at least, by calling himself (ch. iii. v. 10.) *a master-builder.*]

† St Luke, in his history of the Acts, acquaints us with two journeys which our apostle took to Galatia ; but his account of them is very short. He only says, that Paul, Silas, and Timothy, went through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, Acts xvi. 6. without relating any thing that there passed ; from whence we may suppose that his stay there was not long, either because he was called away by the Spirit into Macedonia, or because his preaching there, at first, was attended with such success, that they " received him as an angel of God, or even as Christ Jesus" himself, though he had " then a great infirmity of the flesh," occasioned, very probably, by some bodily sickness. This apostle, without all doubt, was the first who preached to the Gentiles in Galatia ; but there is reason to believe, that before him St Peter had preached to the Jews of that province, as appears from the inscription of his epistle, " to the Strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 1 Pet. i. 1. and it was certainly the Jews whom St Peter here converted, who among the Gentile converts raised the troubles which occasioned our apostle's writing this letter. *Beausobre's* and *Calmet's* Pref. sur L'Épître aux Galates.

[Since our author, Beausobre, and Calmet wrote, it seems to have been completely proved by Michaelis, that St Paul's epistle to the Galatians was the first written of all the epistles of that apostle which

are now extant. The same author has likewise proved, that the seducers of the Galatians were not Jews converted by St Peter, but real Jews of the new Pharisaic sect, founded by Judas of Galilee, which differed in various points from the ancient Pharisees, and in fact involved the Jewish nation in that war which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem. The old Pharisees, in the time of Christ, encompassed sea and land to make one proselyte ; but as soon as the Christian religion began to spread itself among the Gentiles, these men found their advantage in preaching Christianity, which they taught, as if it were nothing more than a reformed Judaism ; and therefore they strictly enjoined the rite of circumcision, abstinence from all meats deemed unclean, and an observance of all the Jewish festivals, not excepting even the Sabbatical year, which was never intended to be observed in any other country than Palestine. The propagation of Christianity, therefore, could have met with no greater impediment than that which the disciples of Judas had thrown in its way ; for they not only clogged the religion of Christ with ceremonies which were become obsolete, but taught the observance of them as the true means of obtaining eternal salvation ! Considering the ardour of St Paul's mind, and the importance of the object at stake, the severity of the terms in which he speaks of such hypocrites can surely excite no wonder ; it would have been more wonderful if he had employed gentler terms. *Marsh's* Michaelis, vol. iv. ch. 11. sect. 2.]

†² In the idolatry of the heathens they used to

cluded in them, perceiving that if the Christian religion prevailed, this gainful employment of his would be totally ruined, called together a great number of the same profession, and having represented to them the injury which St Paul, by his preaching everywhere against idolatry, was like to do, not only to the trade whereby they subsisted, but to the honour and reputation likewise of the great goddess Diana *, whom all the world adored, he so enflamed them with his speech, that immediately they cried out, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" And as the spirit of mutiny soon spread from the workmen to the rabble, it was not long before the whole city was in an uproar.

From Acts. i.
10. to the end

In this confusion the people, seizing upon Gaius and Aristarchus †, two of St Paul's companions, hurried them to the theatre, with a design, very probably, to throw them to the wild beasts, as their custom was to treat malefactors; which when Paul understood, he would have ventured himself among them, had not the Christians then present, and even some of the prefects of the theatrical games †², (well knowing what danger this would have exposed him to) earnestly dissuaded him from it; and to this, without doubt, he alludes, when elsewhere he tells us, that (a) "he fought with beasts at Ephesus ||."

carry the images of their gods in procession from one city to another, which they did in a chariot consecrated for that purpose. But besides this greater, there was a less frame, wherein it was placed, by the Romans called *ferculum*, not much unlike that which the Greeks called *naos*, a little chapel, representing the form of a temple with an image in it, which being set upon the altar, or other solemn place, and the leaves of the door opened, the image appeared, sitting or standing in state, and so was represented to the spectators. The making of these temples and images in miniature was certainly a very profitable employ at Ephesus, because few people of distinction came to visit this great wonder of the world, who did not carry home with them some of these little models of it, not only as an evidence of the pilgrimage they had performed, but as a means likewise to incite their devotion to the goddess Diana. *Hammond's*, *Beausobre's*, and *Pool's* Annotations.

* The heathens, who had their superior and inferior gods and goddesses, always placed Diana in the number of the former, which are all included in the two verses of Ennius:

Juno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars, Mercurius, Jovi, Neptunus, Vulcanus, Apollo.

These were worshipped by the Gentiles of all nations; but the inferior kind, who were called *Dii minorum gentium*, were only known and worshipped in some particular countries and places. *Calmet's* Commentary.

† He was a Macedonian, and native of Thessalonica, who, adjoining himself to St Paul, accompanied him to Ephesus, and there continued with him for the two years of his abode, partaking in all the labours and dangers of the apostleship. From Ephesus he followed him into Greece; from Greece into Asia; from Asia into Judea; and from Judea to Rome; where (as some say) he was beheaded with him in Nero's reign. *Calmet's* Commentary.

†² Among the heathens there were games instituted in honour of the good deities, even as sacrifices

and victims were to appease the bad and angry. Of these games, at Rome, the pontifices, or high priests, were presidents, and, in other places, the priests and chief magistrates, who, from their provinces, were called Asiarchæ, Syriarchæ, Bithyniarchæ, &c. They were generally chosen out of the chief cities and best families in the province, and had the regulation, not only of what concerned the worship of their gods, but of several other public affairs, particularly of the games and combats, which were exhibited to the people on their theatres. Thus, in the martyrdom of Polycarp at Symrna, the people asked Philip, the ruler of the games there, to let out a lion upon the aged bishop, which he refused to do, because (as he tells them) the games were ended; from whence it appears, that it belonged to the Asiarchæ, here mentioned, to let loose the wild beasts upon the malefactors; and therefore, having some kindness for St Paul (a great work of God's Providence that they had), they sent him word to keep close, and not venture himself upon the theatre, knowing that the full purpose of the people was to set him to the *ἀντιμαχία*, or combating with wild beasts, if he did. *Whitby's*, *Beausobre's*, and *Hammond's* Annotations.

(a) 1 Cor. xv. 32.

|| That St Paul, in this place, does actually refer us to what befel him at Ephesus, is manifest from his own words, in another epistle to the Corinthians, where he mentions his great persecution in Asia, (whereof Ephesus was the metropolis), and a "pressure so heavy, that he despaired even of life, having the sentence of death in himself; but that, trusting in God, who raised the dead, he was delivered from so great a death," 2 Cor. i. 8. &c. But then the question is, whether these beasts at Ephesus are to be taken in a literal or metaphorical sense? That cruel and bloody-minded men are often represented under the metaphor of beasts, cannot be denied; and that St Paul was actually exposed to beasts, but they would not touch him, those (says Nicephorus Hist Eccl. lib. ii. c. 25.) who wrote the life of this apostle, do

A. M. 4061,
&c. or 5168.
Ann. Dom.
57, &c.

The tumult, in the mean time, increased rather than diminished; when a certain Jew, named Alexander †, breaking through the crowd, and making a sign with his hand for silence, would have made a speech to the people, with a design, very probably, to excuse the Jews, and throw the odium upon the Christians; but they, perceiving him to be a Jew, and thereby suspecting him to be one of Paul's associates, began to raise an outcry for near two hours together, wherein nothing was heard, but "great is Diana of the Ephesians!" When the noise was a little abated, however, the recorder of the city came out, and calmly told them, "That it was sufficiently known to all the world, what a mighty veneration the city of Ephesus had for their great goddess Diana, and the famous image †² which fell down from heaven; so that there needed not any disturbance to vindicate and assert it; that they had seized on persons who were not guilty either of sacrilege or blasphemy against their goddess; that if Demetrius and his company had any just charge against them, the courts were sitting, and they might enter their accusation; or, if the controversy was about any other matter, there were proper judicatures to determine it in; that therefore they should do well to be pacified, having done more already than they could answer for, and being in danger of incurring a severe punishment if they should be called to an account (as very likely they might) for that day's riotous assembly." And with this prudent discourse he appeased and dispersed the multitude.

As soon as this storm was dispersed, St Paul having called the church together, and constituted Timothy bishop of the place, took his leave, and departed by Troas for Macedonia; where, having instructed some, and confirmed others, in the principles of a sound faith and holy life, he continued his preaching all over the country, even as far as Illyricum †³. While he was in Macedonia, Titus came to him, and gave him an ac-

affirm. Either of these sensés therefore may be true; but as we read nowhere in the Acts, or in the catalogue of his afflictions, 2 Cor. xi. that St Paul did really fight with wild beasts, our best way is to render the preceding words κατ' ἀνθρώπων, not according to the manner, but according to the intention of men, and then the sense will be,—that, according to the intention of the men of Ephesus, he had fought with beasts, because, in the tumult which Demetrius had raised, the people's design was to have dealt so with St Paul's companions, and much more so with him, had not his friends dissuaded him from entering into the theatre. *Hammond's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

† Who this Alexander was, whether a Jew, or a Jewish convert, and whether for or against St Paul, it nowhere appears from the Sacred History; and therefore some have imagined, that this was the Alexander who afterwards revolted from the Christian faith, of whom St Paul complains so loudly, 1 Tim. i. 20. 2 Tim. iv. 14. but that being now a friend and retainer to the apostle, he was about to stand up in his defence, and make his apology. We can scarce think, however, that had the thing been thus, the Jews would have encouraged or put him forward, Acts xix. 33. and therefore the more probable conjecture is, that he was a Jew, who perceiving his countrymen involved in this affair, at their solicitation, was for addressing himself to the multitude, in order to excuse them, and to lay all the blame of the tumult upon the Christians. *Beausobre's* Annotations.

†² The image of this Diana was not set out in an hunting dress, with a bow and arrows in her hand,

and a crescent upon her head; but it was covered with breasts, sometimes from head to foot, and sometimes her bosom only and belly was covered with them, and all besides was a kind of pedestal, adorned at proper distances with the heads of stags and dogs, having about half of their bodies prominent. The multitude of her breasts denoted her fertility, as being called the nurse of all living creatures; and the dogs and stags which belonged to her, were the indication of her being the goddess of hunting. This image, as singular as it was, is said to have been the work of one Canetias, whose name is still upon record; but as it had subsisted long beyond the memory of man, the crafty priests persuaded the credulous multitude that it fell from heaven, that thereby they might advance both its honour and their own profit. *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Pool's* Annotations.

†³ This is a province of Europe, lying to the north, or north-west of Macedonia, along the Adriatic Sea, now called the gulph of Venice; and its ancient boundaries were, to the east, the upper Mæsia and Macedonia; to the west, Istria; to the north, the two Pannonias; and to the south, the Adriatic Sea. It was commonly distinguished into two parts; Lyburnia to the north, where now lies Croatia; and Dalmatia to the south, which still retains its name. St Paul tells us, that from Jerusalem, and round about into Illyricum, "he had fully preached the Gospel of Christ," Rom. xv. 19. So that he must have travelled into Syria, Phœnicia, Arabia, Cilicia, Pamphylia, Pisidia, Lycaonia, Galatia, Pontus, Paphlagonia, Phrygia, Troas, Asia, Caria, Lysia, Ionia, Lydia, the

count of the good effects which his epistle had at Corinth, and how great reformation it had wrought; but as several vain-glorious teachers still persisted in their contumacy, vilifying his authority, and misrepresenting his words and actions; charging him particularly with levity in not coming according to his promise, with severity in his dealings with the incestuous person, with imperiousness in his writings, abjectness in his person, and some small tincture of irreligion, in overthrowing the Mosaic law, (all which he understood from Titus,) he thought it necessary to write a second epistle to the Corinthians; "Wherein he excuses his not coming directly to Corinth, for fear of occasioning their sorrow, and giving himself uneasiness, in being obliged to treat with severity those who had not yet amended their faults; wherein he commends their zeal against the incestuous person, but now, that he had suffered and sorrowed enough for his transgression, allowed them to be reconciled to him; wherein he justifies his conduct, vindicates the dignity and ministry of the Gospel, and proves its great excellency above the law; wherein he disclaims those false teachers, who, to estrange them from him, made it their business to traduce and vilify him; and threatens them with his apostolic authority, whenever he came among them, wherein he speaks of himself with some advantage, and though he mentions his supernatural gifts and revelations, yet seems to glory most in his extraordinary labours and sufferings for the Gospel; and wherein he exhorts them all to the works of penance and mortification, lest, when he comes, he should be obliged to use his power against offenders; and to have their alms in readiness, that they may not be a hindrance to him at his arrival at Corinth."

From Acts. i.
10. to the end.

Having passed over Macedonia, St Paul came into Achaia †, and continued there for the space of three months, residing principally at Corinth, from whence he wrote his famous epistle to the Romans †²: "Wherein he states and determines the great controversy between the Jews and the Gentiles, about the obligation of the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law, and those main and material doctrines of Christianity, which depend on it, such as that of Christian liberty, and the use of indifferent things, &c. Wherein he discovers the effects of original sin, and the power it has even in the regenerate; and then explains the profound questions concerning election and reprobation, in his discourse of the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews; and wherein he intermixes several admirable instructions and exhortations to the duties of an holy and religious life, such as the Christian doctrine does naturally tend to produce."

From Corinth, St Paul, being to carry the alms, which he had gathered in Macedonia and Achaia, to the poor Christians in Judea, intended, at first, to have taken the shortest cut into Syria; but, upon intimation of a conspiracy that the Jews had formed against his life, he altered his course, and determined to go through Macedonia. Accordingly he and his company set forward, and came to Philippi, where he stayed for some time, and there celebrated the feast of the passover. From Philippi he went on board, and in five days landed at Troas, where, having tarried a week, on the Lord's day †³, when the Christians of the place met together to receive the sacrament, he

iles of Cyprus and Crete, Thracia, Macedonia. The salia, Achaia. So justly, and without ostentation, might he say, that in relation to the other apostles, "he laboured more abundantly than they all," 1 Cor. xv. 10. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, and *Calmet's Dictionary*.

† Achaia, in the largest sense, comprehends Greece properly so called; and so is bounded on the east by the Aegean Sea; on the west, by Epirus; on the north, by Macedonia; and on the south, by the Peloponnese; but Achaia, strictly so called, is the northern region of the Peloponnese, bounded on the north by the gulph of Corinth; on the south, by Arcadia; on the east, by Sycinia; and on the west, by the Ionian Sea.

Whitby's Alphabetical Table.

†² It is a general observation of the ancient commentators, that though this epistle has obtained the first place and rank, it is far from being the first that St Paul wrote; that those to the Thessalonians, Corinthians, and the Galatians, were prior; nay, that it was the very last of all that he composed before his first journey to Rome; and therefore they think that it had the first place assigned it in the canon, either from the majesty of the imperial city to which it was sent, or from the excellency of the doctrine which it contained. *Hammond's* and *Whitby's* Annotations.

†³ The words in the original text are,—'Εν δὲ τῇ μιᾷ τῶν Σαββάτων, which we render, "on the first day

A. M. 4062,
&c. or 5169.
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58, &c.

preached to them, and, intending to be gone next morning, continued his discourse till midnight; so that a young man named Eutychus, sitting in a window, and being overtaken with sleep, fell down from the third story, and was taken up dead. But Paul went down and soon recovered him; and so going up again, he resumed his discourse; and in the celebration of the sacrament, and other Divine offices, continued until break of day, and then departed.

From Troas he went on foot to Assos *, where, with St Luke and the rest of the company that were come thither by sea, he embarked, and from thence came to Metylene †; then passing by Chios §, he arrived at Samos ‡; and having stayed a short while at Trogyllium †², the next day came directly to Miletus *², not so much as put-

of the week;” and that this first day of the week was our Lord’s day, or the day of our Lord’s resurrection from the dead, is obvious from the account of all the evangelists; vid. Matth. xxviii. 1. Mark xvi. 9. Luke xxiii. 56. and John xx. 1. And from hence we may observe, that from the very beginning, Christians used to assemble on the first day of the week, to perform their religious worship; for Pliny in his epistle to the emperor Trajan, tells him, “that he found nothing to alledge against the Christians, but their obstinacy in their superstition, and that it was their custom to meet together on a set day, before it was light,” Ep. lib. x. Ep. 97. And what that set day was, Justin Martyr, who wrote not a great many years after Pliny, has taken care to inform us; for “on Sunday, says he, all Christians, in the city or country, meet together, because that is the day of our Lord’s resurrection; and then we have read unto us the writings of the prophets and apostles. When this is done, the president makes an oration to the assembly, to exhort them to imitate, and do the things which they have heard, and then we all join in prayer, and after that celebrate the Sacrament.” Apol. 2. *Whitby’s* Annotations.

* This is a sea-port town, situate on the south-west part of the province of Troas, and over against the island Lesbos. By land, it is a great deal nearer Troas than it is by sea, because of a promontory that runs a great way into the ocean, and must be doubled before we can come to Assos, which was the reason that the apostle chose rather to walk it. *Wells’s* Geography of the New Testament, and *Calmet’s* Commentary.

† This was one of the principal cities of the isle Lesbos, seated in a peninsula, with a commodious haven on each side, and soon became so considerable, as to give name to the whole island (at present called Metelin) many years ago. The island (which is one of the largest in the Archipelago) was, in former times, renowned for the many eminent persons it had produced; such as Sappho, the inventress of Sapphic verses; Alcæus, a famous lyric poet; Pittacus, one of the seven wise men of Greece; Theophrastus, the noble physician and philosopher; and Arion, the celebrated musician; and the Turks, who have it now in possession, think it still a place of consequence enough to deserve a fortress and garrison to defend it. *Wells’s* Geography of the New Testament.

§ This is an island in the Archipelago, next to

Lesbos, or Metelin, both in its situation and bigness. It lies over against Smyrna, and is not above four leagues distant from the Asiatic continent. It is celebrated by Horace and Martial for the wine and figs that came from thence; but at present its renown is, that it produces the most excellent mastick in the world, wherein the people pay their tribute to the Grand Seignior. Nor is it less remarkable for what Sir Paul Ricaut, in his present state of the Greek church, tells us of it, viz. that there is no place in the Turkish dominions where Christians enjoy more freedom in their religion and estates than in this isle, to which they are entitled by an ancient capitulation made with sultan Mahomet II. which, to this day, is maintained so faithfully, that no Turk can strike or abuse a Christian without severe correction. *Wells’s* Geography of the New Testament.

‡ This is another isle in the Archipelago, lying south-east of Chios, and about five miles from the Asiatic continent. It is famous among heathen writers for the worship of Juno; for one of the Sibyls called Sibylla Samina; for Pherecydes, who foretold an earthquake that happened there by drinking of the waters; and more especially for the birth of Pythagoras, who excelled all the seven wise men, so renowned among the Greeks. It was formerly a free commonwealth, and the inhabitants were so powerful, that they managed many prosperous wars against their neighbours; but at present the Turks have reduced it to such a mean and depopulated condition, that a few pirates dare land and plunder it as they please; so that, ever since the year 1676, no Turk has ventured to live upon it, for fear of being carried into captivity by these rovers. *Whitby’s* Alphabetical Table, and *Wells’s* Geography of the New Testament.

†² It is a cape or promontory on the Asiatic coast, opposite to Samos, and not much below Ephesus, having a town of the same name. *Whitby’s* Alphabetical Table, and *Wells’s* Geography of the New Testament.

*² This is a port town on the continent of Asia Minor, and in the province of Caria, memorable for being the birth-place of Thales, one of the seven wise men of Greece, and father of the Ionic philosophy; of Anaximanes, his scholar; Timotheus, the musician; and Anaximenes, the philosopher. At present it is called by the Turks, Melas; and not far distant from it is the true Meander, which, though it encircles all the plain it runs through with many wanton mazes, and innumerable windings, yet, in some places, it goes

ting in at Ephesus, because he was resolved, if possible, to be at Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost. From Miletus he sent to Ephesus to assemble the bishops and pastors of the neighbouring churches, and, at their arrival, put them in mind, "With what uprightness and integrity, with what affection and humility, and with how great danger and trouble he had been conversant among them, and preached the Gospel to them, ever since his coming into those parts: That he had not failed to acquaint them, both publicly and privately, with whatsoever might be profitable to their souls, urging both Jews and Gentiles to repentance and reformation, and an hearty entertainment of the faith of Christ: That now he was determined to go to Jerusalem, where he did not know what particular sufferings would befall him, only that he had been foretold by those who were endued with the prophetic gifts of the Holy Ghost, that in every place afflictions and imprisonment would attend him; but that he was not concerned at this, no, nor unwilling to lay down his life, if so be he might but successfully propagate the Gospel, and triumphantly finish his course: That he knew that from henceforth they should see his face no more; but that this was his particular comfort and satisfaction, that they themselves could bear him witness, that he had not, by concealing any part of the Christian doctrine, betrayed their souls: That, since therefore he was finally to bid them adieu, and the whole care of the church was to devolve upon them, he conjured them to be infinitely careful both of themselves, and of that flock over which the † Holy Ghost himself had made them overseers, and for which Christ had paid no less a purchase than his own blood: That all their care in this respect would be no more than necessary, because it was certain, that, after his departure, not only heretical teachers * would break in upon them, and endanger the ruin of mens souls, but that, even among themselves, there would arise some who, by their crafty methods, and unsound doctrines, would make rents and schisms in the church, even as he with much grief and sorrow of heart, for these three years past, had forwarned them: That to this purpose he now recommended them to God's special care and protection, wishing them all the benefits of the Gospel, perfection of knowledge, and an heavenly inheritance hereafter; cautioning them against avarice, and making a prey of their flocks; and referring them to his own example, what pains they ought to take to support the weak, and relieve the poor, in remembrance of that excellent saying || of our Saviour, 'It is

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

with such a current, as stirs up the earth and gravel from the bottom, which make its water not so clear and crystalline as might be expected. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table*, and *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*.

† That in those early times of Christianity, the Divine Spirit did enable the apostles to discern who were fit to be governors of the church, and that, by its movement or inspiration, they were accordingly chosen into that office, seems to be evident from several passages in Scripture. Thus the Spirit, in the prophets at Antioch, said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work, whereunto I have called them," Acts xiii. 2. and thus the Holy Ghost is said to have "constituted the bishops and presbyters in Asia," Acts xx. 28. because (as Clemens Romanus says), "they made trial of them by the Holy Ghost," or (as Clemens Alexandrinus has it), "they were signified to them by the Spirit;" and therefore Ignatius testifies of the bishops of his time, that "they were not appointed by men, but by the counsel of Christ Jesus," even as St Cyprian says of those in his, that they were constituted, "not only by the consent of the people, and the suffrages of their fellow-bishops,

but by the judgment and testimony of God:" And therefore we need not doubt, but that to this kind of election it is that the words of the apostle refer. *Whitby's Annotations*.

* What we have termed *heretical teachers*, St Paul describes by the metaphor of "grievous wolves, not sparing the flock," Acts xx. 29. and well may they be compared to wolves for their craft and cruelty, their mortal hatred to all good Christians, and lying in wait to circumvent and destroy them. The prophet likens them to evening wolves, Zeph. iii. 3. which come secretly in the dark, and are very hungry, zealous, and passionately desirous to pervert harmless and unwary souls; and, lest their malice should be perceived, these ravenous wolves disguise themselves in sheep's clothing, i. e. they pretend to great innocence and simplicity, they seem to pity the mistakes, and desire the salvation of such as they would insinuate into, and, under this veil, they are taken for friends, though still they remain the worst of enemies. *Comber on Ordination*.

|| It is certain that this saying does not occur in any of the four evangelists; nor does the apostle mention it as an inference from our Lord's several dis-

A. M. 4062,
&c. or 5169.
Ann. Dom.
58, &c.

more blessed to give than to receive' †." After this farewell-sermon, the apostle knelt down, and concluded all with a solemn prayer: whereupon they all melted into tears, and, with the greatest expressions of sorrow, attended him to the ship; though that which made the deepest impression upon them, was his having told them that "they should see his face no more."

From Miletus, Paul and his companions came in a straight course to Coos*, the next day to Rhodes ‖, and thence to Patara §, where, finding a ship that was bound for Phœnicia, they went on board, and arrived safe at Tyre. Here they made a stop for seven days; and St Paul being advised by some Christians of the place (who had the gift of prophecy) not to go up to Jerusalem, would by no means listen to their proposal ‡; but as they, together with their wives and children, accompanied him to the

courses in commendation of charity, but as his own express words; and therefore we must necessarily conclude, that he came to the knowledge of it, either by the information of some disciple, who had conversed with our Saviour in the days of his flesh, or by a particular revelation vouchsafed to himself; which some think more probable, because they cannot perceive how such a remarkable sentence should be forgot, and if not forgot, why it should not be recorded in some of the Gospels. But how uncertain soever the first conveyers of this saying may be, the author of it is unquestionable, since the apostle assures us that it came from Christ. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Collier's Sermons*.

† These words are to be expounded according to the measures and limitations of other proverbial sayings in Scripture: For though, generally speaking, they are true; yet, in some cases, they will admit of an exception. If he that gives, for instance, does it out of a principle of interest or vain-glory, to get a reputation or strengthen a faction; if he does it to encroach upon the liberty of the obliged, to upbraid him with his necessities, to betray him into any sinful compliance, and make him obnoxious to his humour; it is not to be doubted but that, in this case, a grateful and benevolent receiver is much a greater man than such a pretended benefactor; but then if we suppose the giver and receiver, purely considered as such, to be both free from every ill principle and moral indisposition, the circumstances of the giver are more desirable than those of the receiver: 1st, Because giving includes more perfection in it, and is a more secure and honourable condition; 2dly, Because, generally speaking, it is a clearer evidence of a virtuous disposition; 3dly, Because charity is a nobler virtue than gratitude, and will be more considered in "another world; and, 4thly, Because there is more pleasure in giving than receiving. *Collier's Sermons*.

* This was an island in the Archipelago, lying near the south-west point of Asia Minor, and having a city of the same name. At present it is commonly called Lango, and was formerly celebrated for the birth of Hippocrates the famous physician, and Apelles the famous painter; for a stately temple dedicated to Apollo, and another to Juno; for the richness of its wines, and the fineness of a stuff made here, which was perfectly transparent. *Whitby's Alphabetical*

Table, and *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*.

‖ This island (which is supposed to have took its name ἀπὸ τῶν ῥόδων, from the many roses which are known to grow there) lies south of the province of Caria, in Lesser Asia; and among the Asiatic isles is accounted, for dignity, next to Cyprus and Lesbos. It was remarkable among the ancients for the expertness of its inhabitants in the art of navigation; for a college, in which the students were eminent for eloquence and mathematics; for the clearness of its air, insomuch, that there was not a day in the year wherein the sun did not shine upon it; for its pleasant and healthy climate, which induced the Roman nobility to make it a place of their recess; and more especially for its prodigious statue of brass, consecrated to the sun, and called his Colossus. This statue was seventy cubits high, had every finger as big as an ordinary man, and standing astride over the mouth of the harbour, so that the ships sailed between its legs, on account of its vast bulk, was reckoned one of the seven wonders of the world. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table*, and *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*.

§ This is a sea-port of Lycia, formerly beautified with a fair harbour, and many temples, whereof one was dedicated to Apollo, and had an oracle in it, for wealth and credit not inferior to that of Delphi. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*.

‡ But if the persons who dissuaded St Paul from going to Jerusalem were really moved by the Holy Ghost to do this, how could he act contrary to their advice, without opposing what the Spirit of God required, and running himself rashly into what it did forbid? Now to this it may be said, that all that the Spirit discovered to the disciples of Tyre was, that if St Paul pursued his journey, he would certainly meet with very cruel usage; and therefore, out of pure kindness and concern for his welfare, they intreated him to consult his own safety, and not expose himself to the malice of his enemies, by going to a place where they were so violently bent against him. Their dissuading him therefore was properly the effect of their love, and the result of what the Spirit had foretold them, but no part of the Spirit's instructions to St Paul to desist from his journey. † Himself tells us, "That the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city that bonds and afflictions abode him," Acts xx. 23. But

ship before he went on board, he embraced them all, and prayed with them on the shore, as he had done before at Miletus. From Tyre they sailed to Ptolemais †, and there having but just saluted the brethren, they came by land the next day to Cæsarea of Palestine, and lodged at the house of Philip, the deacon and evangelist †², who had four daughters, all endued with the gift of prophecy. During their stay in this place, the prophet Agabus came from Jerusalem, and taking St Paul's girdle *, bound his own hands and feet with it, thereby intimating, that the owner of it should be served in the same manner by the Jews at Jerusalem, and by them be delivered over into the hands of the Gentiles; but St Paul's constancy was not in the least shaken by all these predictions, being ready, as he told those who were dissuading him from going, not only to suffer bonds, but even death itself, for the sake of Christ and his religion; so that, finding his resolution immovable, they importuned him no more, but left the event to the will of God: Whereupon he and his companions set forwards on their journey, and having arrived at Jerusalem before the feast of Pentecost, were received by the Christians there with the utmost demonstrations of joy.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

The next day Paul and his company went to the house of St James, the apostle and bishop of Jerusalem, where the rest of the elders and governors of the church were met together. After mutual salutations, he gave them an account of the success he had met with in the propagation of Christianity among the Gentiles, for which they all glorified God; but withal told him, "That since he was now come to a place where there were many thousands of Jewish converts, who all retained a mighty zeal

this we may be sure was not to prevail with him to abandon the work of the Gospel, but rather to arm him with strength and resolution to accomplish it, without giving himself any pain about the perils that would ensue. *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

† This city was anciently called Accho; but when Ptolemy I. had enlarged it, it took its name from him; though, since its subjection to the Turks, it has recovered some resemblance of its former name, in being now called Acca or Acra. As to its situation, it enjoys all possible advantages both by sea and land; for on its north and east sides, it is compassed with a spacious fertile plain; on the west, it is washed by the Mediterranean Sea; and on the south, by a large bay, which extends itself from the city as far as Mount Carmel. This made it one of the fairest and most commodious cities in Galilee, and for a long time it was the theatre of contention between the Christians and infidels, till, having divers times changed its masters, it was at last, after a long siege, finally taken by the Turks, A. D. 1291, and by them destroyed in such a manner, that, besides a large kane, wherein the French factors have taken up their quarters, one mosque, and a few poor cottages, there is nothing to be seen but a vast spacious ruin; though even here there are some remains, (such as those of the church of St Andrews and St John, the convent of the knights hospitallers, and the palace of the grand master of that order) which distinguished themselves from the general heap, by certain marks of superior strength and magnificence. *Maundrell's* Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem.

†² An evangelist is a preacher of the Gospel, who, being settled in no particular place, was by the apostles sent into different parts of the world, either to

confirm the churches which they had founded, or, by his own labour and application, to found new ones himself. St Paul makes mention of this order of men, and ranks them next to the apostles and prophets, Eph. iv. 2. And to let us know that marriage is not inconsistent with any sacred function, St Luke acquaints us that this deacon and evangelist had four daughters. And indeed the rules which St Paul gives Timothy, are a sufficient demonstration that he allowed bishops, as well as deacons, to be married men; nor is there any thing, either in Scripture or antiquity, that denies them that liberty. For it is evident that St Peter had a wife, Matth. viii. 14. and that St Paul asserts his right to marry if he pleased, 1 Cor. ix. 5. Ignatius affirms that he had a wife as well as St Peter and others of the apostles; and St Ambrose testifies, that all the apostles were married men, except St John and St Paul. *Beausobre's* Annotations, *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Comber* on Ordination.

* It was a common practice among the ancient prophets (to give their predictions a stronger impression) to foretel future events by figurative or symbolical actions. Thus Isaiah went naked and barefoot, to shew what the people of Israel should meet with under the kings of Assyria, Isai. xx. 2. and Ezekiel was to pack up his household goods and remove, to signify their being carried away into captivity, Ezek. xii. 3. and in like manner here Agabus uses a sign. He takes St Paul's girdle, and binds his own hands and feet with it, thereby denoting, that the Jews at Jerusalem would so bind the apostle, and deliver him to the Gentiles, first to the Roman governor of Judea, and afterwards to the Roman emperor. *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Burkitt's* Annotations.

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and veneration for the law of Moses, and who had been informed of him, that in every place he taught the Jews, whom he had converted, to renounce circumcision and other ritual observances, the best expedient to obviate their clamours, would be for him to || join himself to four men, who were just then going to accomplish a vow of Nazaritism; to perform the usual rites and ceremonies with them; to be at the charge of having their heads shaved: and to provide such sacrifices as the law directed; whereby it would appear that the reports spread of him were groundless, and that himself was an observer of the Mosaic institutions." To this advice Paul consented, and taking the four Nazarites with him to the temple, told the priests, that as the time of their vow was now expired, and their purification regularly performed, they were come to make their oblations according to law.

These oblations were to be continued for seven days, which were now almost ended, when certain Jews from Asia, who had there been opposers of St Paul, finding him in the temple, began to raise an uproar, and laying hold on him, called out to the rest for help, because "this is the fellow (said they) who, in all places, vents doctrines injurious to the prerogative of the Jewish nation, destructive to the institutions of the law, and abhorrent to the sacredness of this place, which, by his bringing uncircumcised Greeks into it, he has grossly profaned." (This they affirmed, because they had seen Trophimus * in the city with him); and hereupon they seized him, dragged him out of the temple, shut the gates upon him, and would certainly have killed him, had not Claudius Lysias, commander of the Roman garrison in the castle of Antonia †, come with a considerable force to his rescue and deliverance. As he was going into the castle, Paul, addressing himself to the governor || in Greek, desired the liberty to speak to him; but the governor, supposing him to be the Egyptian §, who, not many years

|| The better to understand this we must observe, that among the Jews it was accounted a kind of meritorious action to contribute to the expence of the sacrifices and offerings which those, who had taken upon them a vow of Nazaritism, were to make, when the time of their vow came to be accomplished. Thus Josephus, to magnify the zeal and devotion of Herod Agrippa, king of the Jews, tells us, "that he caused several Nazarites to be shaved," whereby he means, that he bore the expence of the whole ceremony; and Maimonides informs us, that he who would partake of the merits of another's Nazaritism, went to the temple, and said to the priest, "such an one will finish his vow, and I intend to defray the charge of his tonsure, either in part or in the whole;" and whoever did so, was reputed to partake in the merits of him who had fulfilled his vow. *Calmet's Commentary and Dictionary.*

* This Trophimus was a disciple of St Paul, a Gentile by religion, and an Ephesian by birth. After his conversion he accompanied our apostle wherever he went, and very probably followed him to Rome, and forsook him not in his bonds. After that St Paul obtained his liberty, some pretend that he went into Spain, and passing through the country of the Gauls, left Trophimus there in the capacity of their bishop. But it is not a little difficult to reconcile this with what the apostle writes to Timothy, viz. "that he had left Trophimus sick at Miletus," 2 Tim. iv. 20. unless we can suppose that he returned into Asia again, about a year after that St Paul had left him at Arles, and (as the Greeks will have it) accompanying him to Rome again, at the same time that

the apostle suffered, had his head likewise struck off by Nero's command. *Calmet's Commentary and Dictionary.*

† This was a tower or fortress, where the Romans kept a constant garrison at Jerusalem. It was originally built by the Asmonæan princes, who called it Baris; but Herod the Great, having repaired it, changed its name in honour of his friend M. Anthony. It was situated towards the west angle of the temple, upon an eminence cut steep on all sides, and enclosed with a wall three hundred cubits high. It was built in the form of a large square, having within the magnificence of a palace, and the conveniences of a city; and without several fortifications, and a tower at each corner to strengthen and defend it. So that, considering its form and situation, we may be allowed to say, that it was a citadel to the temple, even as the temple was, in some sort, a citadel to the town. *Calmet's Dictionary, and Fleury's Ecclesiastical History.*

|| That Lysias was no Roman is plain from his telling St Paul, that "with a great sum he had purchased his freedom," Acts xxii. 28. but that he was a Greek we may, in some measure, learn from the common analogy of his name; and therefore it was no bad policy in our apostle to address the governor in his own language; and the governor might be the rather pleased with it, because that, by this means, he might have an opportunity of knowing from St Paul himself the cause of the present tumult. *Calmet's Commentary.*

§ "While Felix was procurator of Judea, there came a certain person (says Josephus) out of Egypt

before, had raised a sedition in Judea, and headed a party of four thousand profligate wretches, seemed to refuse him that favour, until the Apostle informing him that he was a Jew of Tarsus, a freeman of a rich and honourable city, and therefore humbly hoped, that he would not deny him the privilege of vindicating himself, the governor consented; and the apostle, standing upon the stairs, and making signs for silence, began his speech * in the Hebrew language; which, when the people heard, they were a little pacified, and stood attentive to him, while he gave them a particular account of his birth and education; of his extraordinary zeal for the rites and customs of their religion; of his violent persecution of the Christians in all parts, whereof the Sanhedrim could bear him witness; of the miraculous manner of his conversion; and of the commission which he immediately received from God to preach salvation to the Gentiles. Thus far the people heard him with patience; but when he proceeded to defend his practice in preaching to the Gentiles, they could contain themselves no longer, but unanimously cried out to have the villain put to death; and the more to express their indignation, threw off their clothes, and cast dust into the air, as if they intended that moment to stone him. But Lysias, to avoid farther tumult, ordered him to be carried into the castle, and to be examined by scourging †, until he confessed what it was he had done, that so much exasperated the Jews against him.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

to Jerusalem, setting up for a prophet, and persuading the people to follow him to the top of Mount Olivet, some five furlongs from the city; for when he came thither (he told them), he would but speak the word, and immediately they should see the walls of Jerusalem fall flat to the ground, and make way for them to enter the city. But when Felix came to hear of this adventure, he fell upon them with his horse and foot, killed four hundred upon the spot, took two hundred, and put the Egyptian to flight." It is to this story, no doubt, that Lysias alludes; and therefore it seems to be a mistake in Grotius, and others, to say, that the Egyptian mentioned by Josephus was later than these times; for it is apparent from Josephus himself, both in his *Antiquities*, lib. xx. and his *History of the Jewish Wars*, lib. ii. that this Egyptian marched his rabble up to Jerusalem, in the first or second year of Nero: whereas it was not till the fourth year of Nero that St Paul made this his last journey to Jerusalem. *Hammond's and Whilby's Annotations.*

* To give some account of the apostle's conduct in this particular, we must observe, that there were two sorts of Jews at this time, some who used no other language in their common discourse, nor allowed of any Bible in their religious assemblies, but the Hebrew, and these St Chrysostom calls, *οἱ παλαιοὶ Ἑβραῖοι*, profound Hebrews; others that spake Greek, and used the Greek translation of the Bible in their places of worship, and these were styled Hellenists. Of this latter sort was St Paul, because, as we may observe in his writings, he always makes use of the Greek translation of the Old Testament, so that, in this respect, he might not be so acceptable to the other sort. Those of them who were converted to Christianity had great prejudices against him, Acts xxi. 21. which is said to be the reason why he concealed his name in the epistle written to the Hebrews: And as for those who were not converted, they could not so much as endure him; and this is the reason which St Chrysostom gives, why he preached to the

Hellenists only, Acts ix. 28. That therefore he might avert the great displeasure which the Jews had conceived against him, he here speaks to them in the language which they best knew, and most esteemed, and they, by his compliance in this respect, were so far pacified as to give him audience. For they were well enough pleased to hear him discourse of matters relating to religion, and especially of the vocation of the Gentiles, in a language which the Romans did not understand; whereas had he, in the course of his apology, exposed the contempt and hatred which the Jews entertained of all heathens, in a language which the chief captain and his men were acquainted with, and in such a light as his known eloquence would have enabled him to do; it is not to be imagined what terror, or confusion at least, he would have brought upon his enemies. So that it was a point of charity, as well as prudence in him, to speak to them in Hebrew, that thereby he might both screen them from the resentment of the soldiery, and cure them, if possible, of their false prejudices against them. *Hammond's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

† As Lysias did not understand Hebrew, he could not tell what the purport of St Paul's speech to the people was; but, by their mad and outrageous behaviour, he guessed, that he must have said something very provoking, either against the authority of their law, or the dignity of their nation, and therefore he was willing to know the truth of it from himself. Scourging was a method of examination used by the Romans, and other nations, to force such as were supposed guilty to confess what they had done, what were their motives, and who were accessory to the fact. Thus Tacitus tells us of Herennius Gallus, that he received several stripes, that it might be known for what price, and with what confederates, he had betrayed the Roman army. It is to be observed, however, that the Romans were punished in this wise, not by whips and scourges, but by rods only; and therefore it is that Cicero (in his oration pro Rabirio)

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While the lictor was binding him in order to his punishment, Paul asked the centurion that stood by, whether the Roman laws permitted them to treat in this manner a citizen, even before any sentence was passed upon him? Which when the centurion heard, without making any reply, he went directly to the governor, and advised him to act cautiously in this affair, because the prisoner, as he understood, was a Roman citizen; and a citizen indeed he was by birth-right †, whereas the governor himself was such only by purchase *. This made him wave all farther thoughts of scourging him, as being not a little afraid, that he had already done more than he could answer; but being desirous to know the bottom of the matter, the next day he convened the Sanhedrim, and brought down Paul, and set him before them.‡

The sight of so awful an assembly struck no terror into the apostle, who began his apology with an open declaration of the integrity and good intentions of his heart: "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience || before God until this day." This asserting of his innocency, Ananias §, the high priest, looked upon as a kind of

speaking against Labienus, tells his audience, that the Porcian law permitted a Roman to be whipped with rods, but he, like a good and merciful man (speaking ironically), had done it with scourges: And, what is farther observable, neither by whips or rods could a citizen of Rome be punished, unless he were first adjudged to lose his privilege, to be uncitizenized, and declared an enemy to the commonwealth, and then he might be either scourged or put to death; for the form of disfranchising him was this, "Lictor, colliga manus, or caput obnubito, infelici reste suspendito, verberato, vel intra pomærium, vel extra pomærium:" "Lictor, bind his hands, or cover his face, hang him, scourge him, either within or without the suburbs." All which shews the great propriety of the apostle's question to the centurion, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?" Acts xxii. 25. *Calmet's Commentary, Whitby's and Hammond's Annotations.*

† In what manner St Paul obtained this privilege, the learned are not agreed; but it seems to make fair for the opinion of those who think, that the people of Tarsus had it bestowed on them by the favour of some emperor, that Dion Cassius, lib. xlvii. reports, that they sided so far with Julius Cæsar in the civil war, and afterwards with Octavius, that their city obtained the name of Juliopolis, and was honoured with the greatest privileges: which makes Carthusianus, and the gloss upon 2 Tim. iv. 12. say more fully that the inhabitants received this freedom, because they met the Roman ambassadors with peace and crowns, and that then Paul's father, going out with them, received the penula or cloak, as a mark and ensign of a Roman citizen, 2 Tim. iv. 13. *Whitby's Annotations.*

* Photius, in one of his letters, tells us about what time it was that the privileges of a Roman citizen came to be enjoyed, not only by those who were natives of the place, but by as many as either by favour or money were made partakers of that appellation; and several historians have observed, that, under the first emperors, it was highly valued, and cost dear, but that, in the reign of Claudius, it came to be disesteemed, and purchased at a very low rate.

Hammond's and Beausobre's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.

|| The apostle, by a good conscience, does not mean here a conscience void of all error and offence; for he owns himself to have been guilty of a great sin in persecuting the church of Christ, 1 Tim. i. 13. but such a conscience as acted according to his persuasion that he ought so to act; in which sense he says, that when he blasphemed against Christ, and persecuted his church, he did it out of a belief that "he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus," Acts xxvi. 9.; so that the sense of the apostle is,—“While I was persuaded, that the Christian religion was false, I persecuted it with the utmost vigour; but as soon as I came to perceive its Divine institution, I declared for it, and have ever since maintained it, even to the hazard of my life. The religion of the Jews I did not forsake out of any hardships that it required, or any prejudice I had conceived against its precepts; nor did I embrace that of the Christians upon any other account than a full conviction of its truth and veracity. I was a good Jew, in short, as long as I thought it my duty to be so; and when I thought it my duty to be otherwise, I became a zealous Christian; in all which God knows the sincerity of my heart, and is witness of my uprightness.” *Whitby's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

§ He was the Son of Nabadæus, and succeeded Joseph the son of Camith, as himself was succeeded by Ishmael, the son of Fabæus, in the high priesthood. Upon a quarrel between the Jews and Samaritans, Quadratus, governor of Syria, sent him in chains to Rome, to give an account of his conduct to the emperor Claudius; but after a hearing, which was procured him by the interest of young Agrippa, he was acquitted, and returned home, though we read nothing of his restoration to the pontificate. It is evident from the account of Josephus himself, that Ananias at this time was not the high priest, and yet he still retained the titles and honours belonging to it, even as Annas did in the time of Caiaphas. *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xx. c. 5. and Fleury's Ecclesiastical History.*

reflection upon the justice of their tribunal, and therefore ordered the officers that stood near him to strike him on the face; an indignity this, which the apostle resented with severity of language ‡; but when the standers-by accused him with calumniating the high priest, he excused himself by saying, that he did not know, or could not well believe, that a person who had given such unjust orders could be invested with so sacred a character. Perceiving, however, that the council consisted partly of Sadducees and partly of Pharisees, to elude the malice of his enemies, he made open declaration that he was a Pharisee, even as his father was before him, and that the great offence taken against him was his belief of a future resurrection; which so divided the council, that, however the Sadducees, who were violent opposers of this article, were bent against him, the Pharisees, who were zealous maintainers of it, were for acquitting him: So that the dissention among them grew so high, that the governor, fearing lest Paul should be torn to pieces among them, commanded the soldiers to take him from the bar, and to return him back to the castle; where, to comfort him after all his frights and fears, God was pleased to appear to him that night in a vision, encouraging him to constancy and resolution, and assuring him, that as he had borne testimony to his cause at Jerusalem, so, in despite of all his enemies, he should live to do the same thing at Rome.

From Acts. i.
10. to the end.

The next morning above forty Jews entered into a wicked confederacy, which they ratified with an imprecation, never to eat or drink until they had killed Paul; and having acquainted the Sanhedrim with their design, they thought it advisable that some of their body should solicit the governor to bring him down before them, under pretence of enquiring more accurately into his case, and that then, before he reached the court, they would not fail to way-lay and dispatch him. This conspiracy, however, was discovered to St Paul by a nephew of his, and by him imparted to Lysias, who immediately commanded two parties of foot and one of horse to be ready by nine o'clock that night, in order to conduct Paul first to Antipatris*, and thence to Cæsarea, where Felix †, the governor of the province, had his residence. Lysias at the same time sent a

‡ The apostle's words are these:—"God shall smite thee, thou whited wall." A whited wall was a proverbial expression, denoting an hypocrite of any kind, and the propriety of it appears in this:—That as the wall had a fair outside, but nothing but dirt or sticks and stones within, so the high priest had the outward appearance of a righteous judge, sitting as one, that would pass judgment according to law, and yet commanding him to be punished for speaking the truth, and so condemning the innocent, against the law of nature, as well as that of Moses, Lev. xix. 15. Our Blessed Saviour makes use of a comparison much of the same nature, when he calls the scribes and Pharisees "whited sepulchres, which appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead mens bones, and of all uncleanness," Matth. xxiii. 27.; and we need but look into the history of the ancient prophets, and there observe with what an air of authority Elijah and Elisha speak to the kings of Israel, and with what boldness Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, reproach the priests, the princes, and the people of Judah, with their transgressions, to justify our apostle, in taking the same freedom with this proud pontiff, who belied his character by his unjust proceedings. It is to be observed, however, in further vindication of St Paul, that these words of his, "God shall smite thee," are a prediction, and not an imprecation; and a prediction which (according to Josephus) was fulfilled in a short time: For when, in the government of Florus,

his son Eleazar set himself at the head of a party of mutineers, who, having made themselves masters of the temple, would permit no sacrifices to be offered for the emperor, and, being joined by a company of assassins, compelled persons of the best quality to fly for their safety into sinks and vaults, Ananias, and his brother Hezekias, were both drawn out of one of these places, and murdered; though Dr Lightfoot will have it, that he perished at the siege of Jerusalem. *Calmet's Commentary, Whitby's Annotations, and Joseph. de Bello Jud. lib. ii. c. 17, 18.*

* This place, which was formerly called Capharsalama, 1 Maccab. vii. 31. stood upon the sea coast, between Joppa and Cæsarea Palestinæ, but was of little or no repute, until it was rebuilt, or at least repaired and beautified, by Herod the Great, who in honour of his father Antipater changed its name. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table, and Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

† Claudius Felix, who in Tacitus is likewise called Antonius, because he was a slave both to the emperor Claudius and his mother Antonia, was the brother of Pallas, the freed-man, and first favourite of the emperor, by whose interest he obtained the government of Judea; but in the administration of it practised all manner of violence, avarice, and lust. The above-cited historian tells us of him, that "he made his will the law of his government, and ruled the province with all the authority of a king, and the insolence of

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letter to the governor, signifying, "That the person whom he had sent was a freeman of Rome; that the Jews had evil-entreated him, and conspired against his life; that he had taken that method to secure him against their violence; and had ordered his enemies to appear before him at Cæsarea, to manage their charge and accusation." This letter the governor received with great civility; and finding that Paul belonged to the province of Cilicia, promised him a fair hearing as soon as his accusers should come down; and in the mean time ordered him to be secured in a place called Herod's judgment hall ||.

About five days after this, Ananias the high priest, with others of the Sanhedrim, came down to Cæsarea, and brought with them an advocate, named Tertullus *, who, in a speech, set off with all the insinuating arts of eloquence, to prepossess the governor † in their favour, accused St Paul "of being a seditious person, and a disturber of the public peace; who had set himself at the head of the sect of the Nazarenes ||², and made no manner of scruple to profane even the temple itself." But to the several parts of this accusation the apostle (when permitted by Felix to make his defence) answered distinctly. The charge of sedition he utterly denied, and challenged them to prove, that they had ever found him so much as disputing in the temple, or stirring up the people in the synagogues, or any other place of the city. The charge of what they called heresy he readily admitted; but then he affirmed, that, long before him, this was the way in which all the patriarchs of the Jewish nation worshipped God, firmly be-

a freed-slave, whom neither shame nor fear could restrain." He stuck at no manner of cruelty or injustice, having caused Jonathan, the high priest, to be assassinated, merely because he sometimes reminded him of his male-administration; and to gratify his debauchery, he scrupled not to violate all laws, both human and divine. For, being in love with Drusilla, who was married to Azizus, king of the Emisenes, by the help of Simon the magician, a Jew of Cyprus, he took her from her husband's bed; and, in defiance of all law and right, kept her for his own wife. In short, his government was so grievous to the Jews, that they procured his recall, A. D. 60. And as several of them went to Rome after him, to complain of his extortions, and other acts of violence, he had undoubtedly been executed, had not his brother's credit preserved him. *Calmet's Commentary*, *Beausobre's Annotations*, and *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 20. c. 5, 6.*

|| The word *Πραιτώριον*, which we render *judgment-hall*, is properly of Latin extract, and signifies the house where the chief Roman governor lived; and this in Cæsarea is called Herod's prætorium, because it was a magnificent palace, which Herod the Great had built for his own habitation whenever he should go to Cæsarea; but which, in after-times, the Roman governors made use of for the place of their abode, as well as a place of confinement for some particular prisoners. *Calmet's Commentary*.

* It seems very likely that this Tertullus, whose name is properly Latin, was a Roman orator or advocate, whom the Jewish rulers employed in this cause against Paul, as being a person better versed in the Roman language, and formalities of Roman courts than they were. *Beausobre's Annotations*.

† In the preamble, which Tertullus makes to Felix, there is a great deal of gross flattery, mixed with some truth: For, though it be true, that Felix did some

kindness to the Jewish nation, in delivering them from the thieves and magicians that infested them; in destroying Eleazar, in particular, who was at the head of one of these bands of robbers, and in defeating the Egyptian impostor, who drew so many thousands of poor people after him; yet, had the orator been minded to have told the whole truth, he might have accused him of numberless injuries done the province, since no governor was ever known to exercise his authority with more injustice and cruelty than he: but this was not the business of one who, in the beginning of his speech, was to insinuate himself into his favour. *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's Annotations*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

||² This is the only place of Scripture wherein Christians are called Nazarenes, though the author and founder of their religion is frequently so called from Nazareth, a city of Galilee, the place of his nativity (as some supposed), because it was that of his usual abode. At the first appearance of the Gospel, Christians were generally looked upon as a particular sect of the Jews, even as the Pharisees and Sadducees were. The heathens almost always confounded them with the Jews, nor was the distinction properly made till after the destruction of the Jewish temple and the large increase of Pagan converts: But as the word *ἑσέτης*, or *sect*, bears often an indifferent sense, both in the Holy Scriptures and in ancient Jewish writers, we might possibly suppose it so here, did not Justin Martyr (cont. Tryp. p. 234.), inform us, that the Jews very early sent their emissaries to all nations against the Christians, representing them as *ἄθεοι ἄνθρωποι*, an atheistical and wicked heresy; and therefore we have reason to believe, that in this sense they accused Paul, as being a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes. *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Whitby's Annotations*.

believing another life, and a future resurrection; and as to the charge of "profaning the temple," he allowed indeed that several times since his coming to Jerusalem he had been there, but then it was without any multitude, and only to purify himself according to the Mosaic law. Felix gave both sides the hearing, but refused to make any final determination, until Lysias himself came down, of whom he might be more fully informed in the controversy; but, in the mean time, he commanded, that though Paul should be kept under a guard, yet his custody should be so free and easy, that none of his friends should be hindered from visiting, or doing him any office of kindness.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

A few days after this, when his wife Drusilla * (who had been a Jewess) was come to Cæsarea, Felix, being minded to have her hear Paul, ordered him to be brought before them, and gave him leave to speak freely concerning the doctrines of Christianity. In his discourse he took occasion particularly to insist upon the great obligation, which the laws of Christ lay upon men to justice and righteousness towards one another, and to sobriety and chastity both towards themselves and others, from this consideration more especially, viz. the strict and impartial account that must be given, in the day of judgment, of all the actions of their past lives, to be either eternally punished or rewarded for them. Subjects that were wisely adapted to the governor's condition and circumstances, and what stung his conscience so feelingly, that he could not forbear trembling, which made him break off the apostle's discourse with a "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

When Portius Festus *² succeeded to the government of Judea, he found Paul still in prison, left there by his predecessor to gratify the Jews †. Upon his first coming to Jerusalem, the high priest, and other members of the Sanhedrim, exhibited fresh accusations against the prisoner, and in order to his trial, desired that he might be sent for up to Jerusalem, meaning to assassinate || him by the way; but Festus, unwilling to grant

* This Drusilla was the daughter of that Agrippa who put St James to death, and imprisoned St Peter, and was himself miraculously smitten in the midst of his oration at Cæsarea, whereof we have given a full account before. This daughter of his passed for one of the greatest beauties of her age, but was far from being remarkable either for her piety or chastity. At first she was promised in marriage to Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus, king of Comagene, upon condition that he would submit to be circumcised; but, when he refused to comply with that, the match broke off, and she afterwards was married to Azizus, as we said before, who accepted of the condition. When she left him, and took it in her head to live with Felix, who was a Gentile, she forsook her own, and conformed to his religion, according to the testimony of Josephus, *Antiq. lib. xx. c. 5.* and therefore, when St Luke calls her a Jewess, he must be understood thereby to denote her birth and parentage, rather than the form and profession of her religion. *Calmet's Commentary.*

** When Festus came into Judea (which was in the sixth or seventh year of Nero), he found all in desolation and distress; the country laid waste; the people forced from their habitations; their houses exposed to fire and pillage; and all at the mercy of a brutal rout of vagabond freebooters, who, in great numbers, ravaged up and down at pleasure. In those days there was a famous impostor likewise, with a train of credulous rabble at his heels, whom he had deluded into an opinion, that if they did but follow

him into such a wilderness, no harm should ever befall them. Both these sorts of people the governor endeavoured to suppress, and the latter he did effectually; but had not time to accomplish the other, because, in the space of two years, he died, and was succeeded in the province by Albinus. *Joseph. Antiquities, lib. xx. c. 7, 8.*

† He had sorely exasperated them by his unjust and violent proceedings, while he continued in the government, and therefore, upon his dismissal, he thought to have pacified them, in some measure, by leaving Paul (whom he might have discharged long before), still in custody, and still liable to become a prey to their greedy malice: But herein he found himself sadly mistaken; for, no sooner was his disgrace at court known, than several of the principal Jews of Cæsarea took a journey to Rome on purpose to accuse him, and (as we said before) would certainly have wrought his ruin, had not his brother Pal-las (who was now in equal favour with Nero, as formerly he had been with Claudius) interceded for his pardon. *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xx. c. 7.*

|| Which might easily be done by any of the bands of robbers and assassins, (those persons whom Josephus calls Sicarii, from Sica, or the short sword they wore, something betwixt the Persian scymitar and the Roman faulchion) which at that time infested the whole province, and would have done it for a small sum of money, without any suspicion upon the true authors of his murder. *Calmet's Commentary.*

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&c. or 5170.
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their request, ordered them to come down to Cæsarea, where he himself would shortly be, and then he would not fail to do them justice. The Jews accordingly went down; and when Festus was seated on the tribunal, they renewed their charge, and produced their articles against him, which differed not much from what they had accused him of before Felix: But Paul defended himself so well, by making it appear, "that he had neither offended against the Jewish laws, nor against the temple, nor against the emperor," that their charge soon fell to the ground for want of sufficient proof. Festus, however, being willing to oblige the Jews at his first coming to the government, proposed to the apostle his going up to Jerusalem, there to be judged of the matters that were alledged against him; but he, knowing full well the malice of his enemies, and being unwilling to trust himself in their power, boldly declared, "That as he then stood at the emperor's judgment seat, where he ought to have a final trial, if he had done any thing worthy of death, he did not at all decline it, but that as he had injured none of the Jews, and they could prove nothing criminal against him, he ought not to be made a victim to their fury; and therefore as he was a Roman, he appealed † to the emperor himself." Whereupon Festus, being not a little startled, first conferred with his own council *, and then, with some seeming emotion, told the apostle, that since he had appealed unto Cæsar, unto Cæsar he should go.

Not many days after, king Agrippa †‡, with his sister Berenice ||, and a numerous

† This way of appealing was frequent among the Romans, introduced to defend and secure the lives and fortunes of the populace, from the unjust incroachments and over-rigorous severities of the magistrates; whereby it was lawful, in cases of oppression, to appeal from them for redress and rescue; a thing more than once settled by the sanction of the Valerian laws. These appeals were generally made in writing by appellatory libels given into the court, and containing an account of the appellant, the person against whom and from whose sentence he did appeal; But where the case was done in open court, it was enough for the criminal verbally to declare that he did appeal. In great and weighty cases, the appeal was made to the prince himself; whereupon not only at Rome, but in all the provinces of the empire, every proconsul and governor was strictly forbidden to execute, scourge, bind, or put any badge of servility upon a citizen, or any that had the privilege of a citizen, who had made his appeal; or any ways to hinder him from going to Rome to obtain justice at the hands of the emperor, "who had as much regard to the liberty of his subjects (says the law itself) as they could have for their good-will and obedience to him." And this was exactly St Paul's case; who, knowing that he should have no fair and equitable dealing at the hands of the governor, when once he came to be swayed by the Jews, his sworn and inveterate enemies, appealed from him to the emperor, which was a privilege so often, so plainly settled by the Roman laws, that Festus durst not deny his demand. *Cave's Lives of the Apostles.*

* Some annotators are of opinion, that the persons with whom the governor advised upon this occasion, were part of the Sanhedrim who were come to Cæsarea to prosecute Paul; but we can scarce think that any of this body of men would have counselled him to admit of St Paul's appeal, or to send him to Cæsar out of their reach; and therefore we suppose that,

as these governors of provinces were not always great lawyers, though they might sometimes have very nice controversies come before them, they were usually provided with men of sufficient abilities in the Roman laws, who, sitting behind a veil or curtain drawn between them and the governor's tribunal, were ready, in all difficult cases, to assist him with their advice. *Whitby's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

†‡ This prince, who was the son of Agrippa, surnamed Herod, of whom we read so much in the xiith chapter of the Acts, was at Rome with the emperor Claudius when he died. The emperor was inclined to have given him all the dominions which his father possessed; but those who were about him dissuaded him from it; so that sending Cuspius Fadus as procurator to Judea, he kept Agrippa still at court, until he was in a condition to reign. When Herod, king of Chalcis, his uncle by his father's side, died, he gave him his dominions, but soon after translated him to a larger kingdom; for he bestowed on him, not only all the territories formerly belonging to Philip the tetrarch, but added likewise the country of Abilene which belonged to Lysanias. After the death of Claudius, his successor Nero, who had a great affection for Agrippa, to his other dominions added Julius in Perea, and that part of Galilee to which Tarichæa and Tiberias belonged. When the war broke out between the Jews and Romans, this prince was constrained to join his troops with those of Rome, to reduce his countrymen, and assist in the taking of Jerusalem. After the destruction of that city, he retired to Rome with his sister Berenice, with whom he had always lived in an indiscreet manner, and there died at about seventy years of age. *Calmet's Commentary and Dictionary, Echard's and Fleury's Ecclesiastical Histories.*

|| She was at first married to Herod, king of Chalcis, her own uncle by her father's side, but after his death she betook herself to her brother, and with

train, came to Cæsarea to make a visit and compliment to the new governor; who, upon some occasion or other, took an opportunity to entertain them with Paul's case; telling them, "that Felix, upon his parting with the government, had left a certain prisoner, against whom some of the chief of the Jews had brought an information, and immediately demanded judgment, which, according to the Roman law †, could not be done without first hearing the cause, and bringing the parties face to face; and to this purpose he had ordered his accusers to come to Cæsarea, but, upon the result, found that the dispute between them was about matters of their own superstition ‡, and whether a person (whom they call Jesus) was really dead or alive; that being himself unacquainted with such kind of controversies, he had referred the prisoner to the Jewish Sanhedrim, but that he, declining their judgment, had appealed to Cæsar; and that therefore he kept him still in prison, until he could meet with a convenient opportunity to send him to Rome."

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

This account excited the curiosity of Agrippa, who was very desirous to see and hear the prisoner; and accordingly the king and his sister, accompanied with Festus and other persons of quality, came into the court with a pompous and magnificent retinue; and when Paul was brought forth before them, Festus acquainted the king and the whole assembly, "how much he had been solicited by the Jews, both at Cæsarea and Jerusalem, concerning the prisoner at the bar, that, as a notorious malefactor, he might be put to death; but that having found him guilty of no capital crime, and the prisoner himself having appealed to Cæsar, he was determined to send him to Rome; that he was willing, however, to have his cause again discussed before so judicious a person as Agrippa, that he might be furnished with some material instructions to send along with him, since it seemed absurd to him to send a prisoner to the emperor without signifying his crimes." When Festus had ended, and Agrippa had signified to St Paul, that he had liberty to answer for himself; after silence was made, he addressed himself chiefly to Agrippa, and thus began his speech.

"I think myself happy, O king Agrippa, in that I am permitted to make my defence against the accusations charged upon me by the Jews, before a person so exactly versed in all the rites and customs, the questions and controversies of the Jewish law; for which reason I intreat your majesty to hear me with patience.

him continued for some considerable time, till at length, being censured as having an incestuous familiarity with him, in order to justify herself, and wipe off the disgrace, she thought proper to be married again to Polemon, king of Cilicia, who, for the sake of her riches, was persuaded to be circumcised, that he might have her: But they did not live long together, and when she left her husband, she returned to her brother, with whom she behaved in such a manner, as made all the world, as well as the satyrist, take notice of her.

—Deinde Adamas notissimus, et Berenices
In digito factus pretiosior: Hunc dedit olim
Barbarus, incestæ dedit hunc Agrippa sorori.

Juv. Sat. vi.

Josephus's Antiquities, lib. xx. c. 8.

† Of this law and custom of the Romans, Philo Judæus, speaking of their prefects, gives us this account:—"They yielded themselves to be common judges, hearing equally the accusers and defendants, condemning no man unheard, prejudging no man, but judging without favour or enmity, according to the nature of the cause." Hammond's Annotations.

‡ The word in the original is *Ἀσινδαμονία*, i. e. a

vain and groundless fear of the gods: For the "pious man (according to Varro) honours and fears God, but the superstitious man dreads him, and is seized with terror before him;" and, to the same purpose, Maximus Tyrius tells us, that a man truly pious looks upon God as a friend, full of goodness; but the superstitious man serves him with sentiments of base and servile flattery. Now, considering that Festus was addressing himself to Agrippa and Berenice, who were certainly Jews, one may be apt to think it a breach of good manners for him to call the religion they professed by no better a name than that of superstition; but then we must observe, that he is supposed to speak here in the common strain of heathens, who generally looked upon all Jewish ceremonies as superstitious usages; and that he made it no scruple to express himself in this manner, as either accounting himself so much superior to such petty princes, that he thought he might make free with them, or as judging that themselves would not be offended at his representing the particular points in dispute between St Paul and his adversaries in such a contemptuous light. *Cabinet's Dictionary and Commentary.*

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&c. or 5471.
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My manner of life from my youth, which was among the Jews at Jerusalem, they all know, and that I was brought up under the institution of the Pharisees *, a sect the strictest of all others in the Jewish religion. Accordingly, now I am accused for asserting the resurrection || of the dead, which is not only a doctrine acknowledged by the Pharisees, but a fundamental promise made by God of old, which the generality of the Jews ||² depend upon, and in hopes of which they spend their time in constant piety and obedience to God: And yet for believing and expecting this, O king, I am accused and persecuted by the Jews: But why should it be thought an incredible thing, that God, who is omnipotent, should raise the dead? I confess indeed, that once I was of opinion, that I was bound in conscience to persecute this profession and doctrine of Christ; and, accordingly, having obtained a commission from the high priest, many holy men and women in Jerusalem I not only hurried to prison, but, when any of them were put to death, was myself not a little assenting and assisting in it. Nay, in other places too, I brought them before courts of judicature; by several methods of severity, forced them to deny Christ; and was so much enraged against them, that I compelled them to flee to heathen cities, and even thither pursued them. To

* That of the three sects which were then of greatest credit in Judea, the Pharisees were the most strict, and held in the greatest veneration, we have the testimony of Josephus, who, in more places than one, informs us, "that this sect was thought to be more pious than others, and more exact in their knowledge of the customs of their fathers and in the interpretation of their laws." For, as for the other two famous sects, the Sadducees, by denying the resurrection and all future punishments, took away the rewards of a virtuous, and gave licence to a vicious life; and the Essenes, by being Jews, and yet, separating themselves entirely from the worship of the temple, were guilty of a great schism, and by making their prayers and religious addresses to the sun, (as Josephus, who lived three years among them, testifies) were chargeable with idolatry. *De Bello Jud. lib. ii. c. 7. Whitby's Annotations.*

|| But why should St Paul say that he was accused for asserting the general resurrection, when it was only the resurrection of Christ that he was called in question for? Now in answer to this it must be observed, that before our Saviour's passion the doctrine which he preached was chiefly levelled against the vain traditions of the scribes and Pharisees, but that, after his resurrection, the testimony of the apostles being this, "that Christ was risen from the dead," which was directly contrary to the notion of the Sadducees, these people became their hottest enemies, "being grieved (as the text expresses it) that they preached the resurrection of the dead through Jesus," Acts iv. 1, 2. as easily perceiving that the proof of the one, viz. "that Christ was risen," was a confirmation of the general resurrection. As therefore the resurrection of Christ was a pledge and assurance of a general resurrection; it was impossible for the apostles to attest the one without asserting the other, since, in the truth of the thing, and according to the sentiments of the Jews themselves, the resurrection was to be effected by the Messiah; for which reason we find St Paul styling our Lord "the first-fruits of them that slept," and declaring

farther, that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," 1 Cor. xv. 20, 22. *Whitby's Annotations.*

||² That the Jews had grounds sufficient, in the writings of the Old Testament, to expect a future resurrection, is evident from our Saviour's application of God's own words, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," Exod. iii. 6. "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living," Matth. xxii. 32. Wherever God is styled the God of any one, it always signifies that he either is or will be the benefactor of that person; and in naming Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he must mean it of their complete persons, which consisted of bodies as well as souls; and from hence it will follow, that as the troubles and afflictions which these three patriarchs underwent in their lifetime, did not answer those favours and kindnesses which are included in the phrase of his being the God of any one, God was still engaged to make them happy after this life, and completely happy in their whole persons, i. e. both in body and soul, which could only be effected by their resurrection. This is the deduction which our Saviour makes; but when we read in the prophets, "that the earth shall cast out the dead, and those that dwell in the dust shall arise," Isa. xxvi. 19. and more expressly still, "that many of them who sleep in the dust shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting confusion," Dan. xii. 2. we need less wonder that we find the martyrs in the Jewish church not doubting, "but that the Creator of the world would give them breath and life again, and would raise those up, who died for his laws, unto everlasting life," 2 Mac. vii. 9, 23. Good reason therefore had the apostle to represent this as the hope of their tribes; for though the Sadducees denied it, yet (as Josephus informs us) they were but an handful of men in comparison, and whenever they came to bear offices, they were forced to profess the doctrine of the Pharisees, otherwise the common people would not have endured them. *Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 2. Whitby's Annotations.*

this purpose, having received authority from the Sanhedrim to go to Damascus, at noon-day, O king, I saw a light from heaven, far exceeding that of the sun, which struck me, and those that accompanied me to the ground; and heard a voice in the Hebrew tongue, calling me by name, and admonishing me to forbear my cruel and persecuting temper, because, from that time, I was chosen to be a preacher and promoter of that doctrine which I was then labouring to destroy, and particularly commissioned to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, in order to convert them from their idolatrous worship to the service of the true God. In obedience therefore to this heavenly vision, I have ever since been very diligent in preaching the doctrines of repentance and reformation, not in Judea only, but in other nations, and not to the Jews only, but likewise to the Gentiles. This, O king, is my great crime; and for this it was that the Jews apprehended me in the temple with a design to have murdered me; but being supported by a Divine power, I continue in my duty to this day, asserting nothing but what is agreeable to Moses and the prophets, who have plainly foretold, that the Messiah should be put to death, and rise again, and by his doctrine enlighten both Jews and Gentiles." While he was thus discoursing, Festus, who happened to be no great master of the argument, was ready to think, that his talking in this abstruse manner must be the effect of some deliriousness, and therefore told him abruptly, that his too much *learning* had made him mad. But to this he calmly replied; "I am in my perfect senses, most noble Festus, and what I say, without excess or transport, is literally true. For this I appeal to Agrippa, before whom I take this freedom of speech, and am confident that he knows it to be true. The life, death, and resurrection of Christ were things of public note, and cannot be a secret to him who was a Jew born. Believest thou the prophets, O king? I am satisfied thou dost, and therefore cannot but know that their predictions are fulfilled in Christ." This moving and persuasive eloquence so wrought upon Agrippa, that he could not forbear declaring, that the apostle had almost persuaded him to be a Christian *: To which he readily replied, "that he heartily wished, that not only he, but the whole company then present, were not only almost, but altogether †, (though not prisoners) as much Christians as himself was." Upon this the assembly broke up; and when Agrippa and Festus had conferred together about Paul's case, they freely owned, that the accusation laid against him amounted neither to a capital offence ‡, nor any thing deserving imprisonment, but that had he not appealed unto Cæsar he might have been legally discharged.

From Acts i.
10. to the end

* Festus must have known, from some other hand, that Paul was a learned man; because, in this speech of his, he gives us no indication of his proficiency either in the Greek or Roman literature; though he might think, from the terms which he heard him make use of, that the subject of his discourse must be vastly mysterious; for to hear him speak of the "resurrection of the dead, of a vision and voice from heaven, of faith in Christ, of conversion from darkness to light, of deliverance from the power of Satan, of an inheritance among them that are sanctified, and of Christ's shewing light unto the people, and to the Gentiles," which were so many enigmas to the governor, was enough to make him think that there possibly might be some disorder in the apostle's brain that made him talk in so unintelligible a manner. *Calmet's Commentary.*

** This seems to imply, that, since the time that they took it upon themselves at Antioch, the name of Christians was become their common appellation. *Beausobre's Annotations.*

† When Felix understood that St Paul was a citi-

zen of Rome, the text tells us, that "he commanded the centurion to set him at liberty," Acts xxxiv. 23. But whether that liberty extended so far as to release him from his bonds, is the matter in doubt. It must be allowed, that the words, "except these bonds," Acts xxvi. 29. would sound with a better grace, and be a finer compliment to the company, if so be, that the apostle at this time had his fetters on, and actually pointed at them when he spake; but as bonds may not improperly signify a prison, it is enough to justify that expression, that he was still kept in durance, and under the custody of a guard. *Calmet's Commentary, and Beausobre's Annotations.*

‡ Claudius indeed, towards the latter end of his reign, had published an edict against the Jews, to banish them out of Italy, Acts xviii. 2. and by that the Christian Jews (but then as Jews, not as Christians), fell under that interdict. As yet there was no penal laws against Christians as such: He who first dedicated persecution (as Tertullian expresses it), and made the profession of Christianity a capital offence, was Nero. But now this appearance of Paul before

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His journey to Rome therefore being thus finally determined, he and some other prisoners of note were committed to the charge of one Julius a centurion, or captain of the legion called Augusta, having Luke the evangelist, Aristarchus, Trophimus, and some others, to accompany him in his voyage. † About the latter end of September they went on board a ship of Adramyttium ‡, and coasting along Asia arrived at Sidon; where Julius, who all along treated Paul with great civility, gave him leave to go ashore and refresh himself. From Sidon they set sail, and came in sight of Cyprus, and having passed over the seas of Cilicia, and Pamphylia, landed at Myra †², a port in Lycia, where the ship finished its voyage. At Myra, Julius and the prisoners that were under his care went on board a ship of Alexandria, bound for Italy; and having passed by Cnidus *, with much ado they made for Salmone, a promontory on the eastern shore of Crete, from whence, by many days slow sailing, they arrived at a place called the Fair Havens on the coast of the same island. Here St Paul advised the centurion to put in and winter, because the season of the year was far advanced, and sailing *² in those seas especially was now become dangerous; but he preferring the judgment of the master of the ship, and the wind at this instant blowing gently at south, they put again to sea, in hopes of reaching Phœnice, another harbour of Crete, where there was safe riding, and there to winter. It was not long, however, before they found themselves disappointed; for the calm southerly gale which blew before, suddenly changed into a stormy and †³ tempestuous north-east wind, which bore down all before it, so

Agrippa was before this rage of his broke out, and accordingly we find that St Paul had appealed to his tribunal, as well knowing that the difference between him and the Jews was a thing of that nature, that no law of the Romans would take hold of it; but it is easy to perceive, that his appeal would have stood him in no stead, if Christianity at this time had been under any imperial interdict. *Hammond's Annotations.*

† When the fast was now already past, is the signification of time in the text, Acts xxvii. 9. and without all controversy, this was the great annual fast of expiation for the sins of the people of Israel, Lev. xvi. 29. which began on the tenth day of the month Tizri, answering to the twenty-fifth of our September. This was the commencement of their civil year; and therefore it is no wonder that St Luke should make use of this epocha, the fast being already past, to denote a particular part of the year, since he wrote his Gospel for the use of Christians, who at this time were chiefly Jewish converts, and consequently no strangers to this kind of language. *Hammond's and Whitby's Annotations, and Calmet's Commentary.*

‡ Some of the ancients are of opinion, that this was a city of Egypt, built by Alexander the Great, as a monument of his triumphs at the Canopic mouth of the Nile, and is by Livy and some others made the same with Thebes; but the Adramyttium here spoken of, must be that sea-port in Mysia, a province in Asia Minor, lying over against the isle of Lesbos or Metelin, and not far from Troas: for whoever looks into a map, may see that from Cæsarea, where the ship set out, to Myra and Lycia where it touched, lies the direct course to Adramyttium in Mysia. *Whitby's Alphabetical Table, and Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†² Lycia was a province in Asia Minor. bounded on the east by Pamphylia; on the west, by Caria;

on the north, by Phrygia; and on the south by the Mediterranean Sea: Its Metropolis was Myra, which when it was Christian, was an Archbishop's See; but at present there is nothing remarkable in the whole province, except that Taurus, the chief and famous mountain of all the Asiatic continent, takes its rise here. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

* This is a city which stands on a promontory, or foreland of the same name, in that part of the province of Caria, which was more peculiarly called Doris, remarkable among the ancients for the worship of Venus, (thence called by Horace, Regina Cnidi) and for the celebrated statue of that goddess, which was made by the great artificer Praxiteles. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament, and Whitby's Alphabetical Table.*

*² It is a common observation of mariners, that for some weeks before and after Michaelmas, there are at sea sudden and frequent storms, commonly called Michaelmas flaws, which at that time of the year make sailing (especially in the Mediterranean) dangerous. Nor is this any new observation, but as old as Hesiod himself, who tells us, that at the going down of Pleiades, which was at the end of autumn, navigation was hazardous.

Δὴ τότε παντόων ἀνέμων θύουσιν αἴτας.

And again,

νότατό τε δεινὰς αἴτας,

Ὅς τ' ἄρ' ἐβριθεύσας, ὁμαρτίσας Διὸς ὄμβρῳ
Πολλῶ, ὁπαρῖνῶ, χαλεπὸν δὲ τε πόντον ἔθηκεν.

De Op. lib. ii.

The very same thing that the apostle here asserts. *Hammond's Annotations.*

†³ The words in their original are, Ἄνεμος τυφονικός ὁ καλούμενος Εὐρεκλύδων, Acts xxvii. 14. Ventus Typhonicus is a whirlwind, which Pliny with great elegance has thus described,—“Typhon desert secum aliquid

that they were forced to let the ship drive ; but to secure it from splitting, they under-^{From Acts. i.}girt it ; and to prevent its running a-ground on the shallows, threw out a great part ^{10. to the end.} of its lading and tackle.

For fourteen days the company continued in this condition, without ever seeing either sun or stars, and began all now to give up their lives for lost ; when St Paul, having a little blamed them for not taking his advice, desired them however to be of good courage, because he had assurance from heaven, that, whatever became of the ship, they should escape to an island, and not one of their lives be lost. On the fourteenth night, as the sailors were throwing the lead, and sounding, they found themselves nigh some coast ; and, apprehending they might strike upon some shelves in the dark, thought proper to come to an anchor till the morning might give them better information : But, not staying for that, they were attempting to save themselves by getting into the boat, when St Paul, perceiving it, told the centurion, that unless they all stayed in the ship none could be safe ; whereupon the soldiers cut the ropes and let the boat drive. A little before day-break St Paul persuaded them to take some nourishment, because in all that time of danger, which had been || for fourteen days, they had eaten in a manner nothing ; and to encourage them to do this, he assured them again, that “not a hair of their heads should perish.” In the morning they discovered land, and discerning a creek, which seemed to make a kind of haven, they resolved, if possible, to put in there ; but in their passage, unexpectedly fell into a place where two seas met, and where the forepart of the ship, striking upon a neck of land that ran out into the sea, the hinderpart was soon beaten in pieces by the violence of the waves. When the soldiers saw this, they proposed putting all the prisoners to the sword, lest any of them should swim to land, and make their escape ; but the centurion, who was willing to save Paul, by no means allowing of that, gave orders that every one should shift for himself ; and the issue was, that, some by swimming, others on planks, and others on pieces of the broken ship (to the number of two hundred and seventy-six persons), they all got safe to shore.

The country upon which they were cast, as St Paul had foretold, was an island called *Me-

abruptum è nube gelidâ, convolvens versansque, et locum ex loco mutans rapidâ vertigine ; præcipua navigantium pestis, non antennas modo, verum ipsa navigia contorto frangens,” l. 2. c. 48. But then we cannot but think, that the proper name of this wind was not *Εὐροαλῦδαν*, which is a word we read no where else, and whose signification we are no ways certain of, but *Ἐρακύλαν*, or euro aquilo, a wind which blew from east and by north ; because, if we observe the course that the ship made from the Fair Havens, which lie on the eastern point of Crete, to the island of Malta, we shall soon perceive that it required exactly such a wind to drive it thither. *Calmel's Commentary*, and *Hammond's Annotations*.

|| The words in the text are,—“This is the fourteenth day that ye have continued fasting, having taken nothing,” Acts xxvii. 33. Now, because it was impossible for them, without a miracle, to continue fasting fourteen days without eating any thing, some have been induced to render the words thus, “Ye have continued expecting this day, which is the fourteenth day,” i. e. waiting to see the success of it, which, it seems, in the opinion of the mariners, was a critical day to them, wherein their danger was at the highest, and therefore they ate nothing all that day, as having no leisure to consider hunger, when their greater danger, and more immediate fear, was

drowning. But as we read nothing of this critical day, so the long fasting mentioned in ver. 21. determines the sense otherwise, and makes St Paul's words indeed amount to no more than a common familiar expression, that may, almost every day, be heard at any table where there happens to be a puny stomach ; “You have ate nothing (says the master of the house to such an one), very little, or next to nothing.” *Whitby's*, *Hammond's*, and *Beausobre's Annotations*.

* This island is supposed to have had its name at first from the great quantity of honey (in the Greek language called *μέλι*) which it produced. It yielded likewise cotton-wool in abundance, which the people used to sow, as we do corn, and no small store of excellent fruits both for taste and colour ; and yet the whole island is one continued rock, and has not above three feet depth in earth ; it is computed to be about twelve miles broad, and twenty long ; lies distant from Sicily about sixty miles, and much more from the coast of Africa ; so that no other reason can be given, why some geographers have reckoned it among the African isles, but that it once belonged to Carthage. At present it is called Malta, and is remarkable on account of its being granted to the knights of St John of Jerusalem (formerly called the knights of Rhodes, but now knights of Malta), by Charles V. after that the Turks had beaten them out of Rhodes,

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lita, now Malta; and † the natives of the place received them with great civility and kindness, making them fires to dry their wet clothes, and cherish their benumbed limbs; but, as Paul was throwing some sticks upon the fire ‖, a viper, dislodged by the heat, came out from among them, and fastened on his hand; which, when the natives saw, they immediately concluded, that he was some notorious malefactor or murderer, whom the Divine vengeance (though it suffered him to escape the sea) had reserved for a more public and solemn execution. But when they saw him shake off the venomous creature into the fire, and no manner of harm ensue, they changed their sentiments to the other extreme, and cried out, that ‡ “he was a god.”

Not far from this place was the residence of * Publius, the governor of the island,

in the year of our Lord 1530. These knights, according to their institution, are in number a thousand, whereof five hundred are to be resident in the island, and the other five hundred are dispersed through Christendom, in their several seminaries; which are in France, Italy, and Germany, as there was one likewise in England before it was suppressed by Henry VIII. Each of these seminaries hath over it a grand prior. He that is chief of the whole order is styled great master of the hospital of St John of Jerusalem, and the others commonly called knights hospitallers, from whom many places that formerly belonged to them here in England do still retain something of their name, by being called in short Spitals. [The order of the knights of Malta is now dissolved, and the island under the dominion of the British monarch; but it could hardly be the island on which St Paul was shipwrecked, for the vessel was then in *Adria*—the Adriatic gulph, from which Malta lies too far to the south to be the island in question. In the opinion of Bryant, which Hales has judiciously adopted, the island, on which the apostle was wrecked, was on the Illyrian coast, near *Corcyra Nigra*, and anciently called *Μελιτη*; *Melida* or *Melode*, and by the Sclavonians *M'leet*; the inhabitants of which merited the title of *barbarians* in the worst sense of the word, though then, by the good Providence of God, they shewed to the shipwrecked no small kindness.] *Wells's* Geography of the New Testament, *Bryant's* Observations and Enquiries relating to Various Parts of Ancient History, and *Hales's* Analysis, &c.

† That the people of Malta were originally a colony of the Carthaginians, is manifest from several old inscriptions that are there to be seen in the Punic character; and from the present language of the natives, which differs very little from Arabic. At Valette indeed, which is the principal city in this island, the inhabitants speak Italian likewise; and the reason of this is, because the knights hospitallers have settled their abode here; but the country people have no knowledge of this tongue; and though in this place there are two Greek parishes, yet these are only for the Grecians, descendants of those who quitted Rhodes when these knights were expelled by the Turks, and followed their fortune to Malta. The Sicilians and Africans had a long contest for the property of this island; but at length the Romans became masters of it, though, when they had it, they never attempted to introduce their own language. They, however, as well as the Greeks, held all nations in a kind of con-

tempt that did not speak their language, or that did not speak it correctly, and without the mixture of any other dialect; and this is the reason why St Paul's company, who were all Greeks or Latins, called the Maltese barbarians. *Calmet's* Commentary, and *Beausobre's* Annotations.

‖ *Vipera quasi vivipara* (a sort of serpent, so called, because it brings forth its young alive) is but a small creature (the largest not above half an ell long, and an inch thick), but so very poisonous, that the bite of it will sometimes kill a person in a moment, or cause a sudden inflammation all over the body, as the people of Malta we see expected of St Paul, Acts xxviii. 6. The people of that island, however, have a tradition, that ever since the time that the apostle was bitten by one, whatever vipers are found there have no venom in them; and that some of them, when, out of curiosity, carried into Sicily, become as poisonous as others, but when brought back to Malta again, lose all their venomous quality. Nay, they add further, that as there are great numbers of petrified vipers and other serpents in this island, those who carry pieces of these about them, will be preserved from the biting of any venomous animal; and that those who for want of them chance to be bit, may certainly be cured, by taking some of the powder of one of the petrifications mingled in a little water. *Calmet's* Commentary and Dictionary under the word *Malta*.

‡ Hercules was one of the gods whom the people of this island worshipped, and to him they ascribed the power of curing the bite of serpents. *Beausobre's* Annotations.

* That he was governor of the island is highly probable from an inscription found there, and set down by Grotius, wherein the ΠΡΩΤΟΣ ΜΕΛΙΤΑΙΩΝ is reckoned among the Roman officers, and that both he, and most of the people under him, were converted to the Christian faith, is the joint opinion of St Chrysostom, and some other Greek authors; whereas Ado, with several Latin writers, affirms, that Publius, joining himself to St Paul, was by him made a bishop, and sent to preach the Gospel; and that coming to Athens, he there settled, governed that church in the quality of their bishop for some time, and then ended his life by martyrdom. But this is a mistaken piece of history, since the Publius, who was the bishop of Athens, did not suffer martyrdom till the time of Marcus Aurelius. *Cave's* Lives of the Apostles, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

who entertained this shipwrecked company with great hospitality for three days ; in acknowledgment of which, St Paul, by his prayers, and the imposition of his hands, recovered his father from a fever and bloody-flux ; and several others of the inhabitants, afflicted with any kind of disease, he restored to their former health and strength ; for which they not only shewed him the highest marks of their esteem, but furnished both him and his company with all necessaries proper for the rest of their voyage.

After three months stay in this island, the centurion and his charge went on board the † Castor and Pollux, a ship of Alexandria, bound for Italy. At ‖ Syracuse they put in, and tarried three days ; thence sailed to †² Rhegium, and so to ‡ Puteoli, where they landed ; and finding some Christians there, at their request stayed a week with them, and then set forward in their journey to Rome. The Christians of this city,

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

† These were two brothers, sons of Jupiter and Leda, who (as the poets fable) sprung from the same egg, and are therefore represented as having each the half of an egg-shell in his hand, because it is pretended, that Jupiter conversed with their mother in the form of a swan. These two brothers were of great reputation for their valour, and particularly for the wars which they waged against the corsairs and pirates, for which they had Divine honours paid them, being the peculiar deities of mariners, to whom they made their vows in every voyage, and whose assistance they implored in every storm. Among the ancients it was the custom to have the image of some creature or other painted or engraven upon the prow of every ship of burden, from which the vessel had its name : And hence the poets have given it out, that Europa was carried away by a bull, and Ganymede by an eagle, and that Phryxus rode over the Euxine Sea on a ram, because the ships employed in the voyages had such creatures for their ensigns, and from them borrowed their names. But, besides all this, it was usual with the ancients to have some god or other generally painted upon the stern, as the patron or tutelary god of the vessel ; and therefore we may observe, that the same ship which Virgil calls the Tiger, because of the image of that animal on its prow,

——— *Æratâ princeps secat Æquora Tigri,*
had on its stern the image of Apollo,

——— *Aurato fulgebant Apolline Puppis.*

Æneid x.

But whether this Castor and Pollux was painted or engraven on the prow or stern of the ship, it is plain that St Paul was not so superstitious as to refuse to sail in it, nor St Luke to make mention of it upon that account. *Cabnet's Dictionary and Commentary, Hammond's and Whitty's Annotations.*

‖ This was a city of Sicily, seated on the east side of the island, with a fine prospect from every entrance both by sea and land. Its port, which had the sea on both sides of it, was almost all of it environed with beautiful buildings, and all that part of it which was without the city, was on both sides banked up, and sustained with very fair walls of marble. The city itself, while in its splendor, was the largest and richest that the Greeks possessed in any part of the world. For (according to Strabo) it was two and twenty miles in circumference, and both Livy and Plutarch inform us, that the spoil of it was equal to that of Carthage. It was called Quadruplex, as be-

ing divided into four parts, Acradino, Tyche, Neapolis, and the island of Ortygia. The first of these contained in it the famous temple of Jupiter ; the second, the temple of Fortune ; the third, a large amphitheatre, and a wonderful statue of Apollo in the midst of a spacious square ; and the fourth, the two temples of Diana and Minerva, and the renowned fountain of Arethusa. About two hundred and ten years before the birth of Christ, this city was taken and sacked by Marcellus the Roman general, and, in storming the place, Archimedes, the great mathematician, who is esteemed the first inventor of the sphere, and who during the siege had sorely galled the Romans with his military engines, was slain by a common soldier while he was intent upon his studies. After it was thus destroyed by Marcellus, Augustus rebuilt that part of it which stood upon the island, and, in time, it so far recovered itself as to have three walls, three castles, and a marble gate, and to be able to set out twelve thousand horse, and four hundred ships. But the blow which the Saracens gave it, A. D. 884. when they razed it to the ground, it even feels to this day. *Whitty's Alphabetical Table, and Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

†² Rhegium, now called Reggio, is a port town in Italy, opposite to Messina in Sicily, and is thought to have had this name given it by the Greeks, who suppose, that much about this place Sicily was broken off from the continent of Italy by the sea. At present it is an archbishop's see, and a considerable place for trade, though it has several times formerly been surprised and plundered by the Turks. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

‡ This place, which is now commonly called Pozzuoli, is a city in Terra di Lavoro (a province in the kingdom of Naples), situated upon an hill, in a creek of the sea, and just opposite to Baiæ (on the other side of the creek), a place of great renown among the Roman writers. Within the bounds of this city there are five and thirty natural baths of different sorts of warm waters, very useful for the cure of several diseases ; and from these baths, or pits of water, called in Latin, Putei, the town is said to have taken its name. At present it is a bishop's see, under the archbishop of Naples, and in it are to be seen many Roman antiquities, and natural rarities, not easily to be found elsewhere. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament.*

A. M. 4065,
&c. or 5172.
Ann. Dom.
61, &c.

hearing of the apostle's coming, went out to meet him, some as far as * Appii-forum, and others as far as the † Three Taverns; which, when he saw, he blessed God, and took courage. They all conducted him in a kind of triumph into the city; where, when they were arrived, the rest of the prisoners were delivered over to the ‖ captain of the guard, but Paul was permitted to stay in a private house, only †² with one soldier for his ward.

Three days after his arrival at Rome, St Paul sent for the heads of the ‡ Jewish consistory there, and to them related the cause of his coming; viz. "That though he had been guilty of no violation of the laws of their religion, yet, by the Jews at Jerusalem, he had been delivered into the hands of the Roman governors, who more than once would have acquitted him as innocent of any capital offence, but that, by the perverseness of his persecutors, he was constrained (not with any intention to accuse his own nation, but only to clear and vindicate himself) to make his appeal to the emperor." Having thus removed a popular prejudice, and insinuated the cause of his suffering to be that which their own religion had taught him, viz. "the belief and expectation of a future resurrection," he gained so far upon their affections, as to have a second conference by their own appointment, for explaining the principles of Christianity to them. Accordingly, when they were met together, he discoursed to them from morning to night, concerning the religion and doctrine of the holy Jesus, proving, from the promises and predictions of the Old Testament, that he was the true Messias: But the success of his discourse was different, some being convinced, and others persisting in their infidelity; so that they parted with no small difference and disagreement among themselves.

For two whole years Paul dwelt at Rome, in an house which he hired for his own use, wherein he constantly employed himself in preaching and writing for the good of the church. He preached daily without interruption, and with good success, insomuch, that his imprisonment very much redounded to the propagation of the Gospel, and

* This place, at present called Cassarilla di St Maria, was an ancient city of the Volsci, about fifty miles distant from Rome, and is probably thought to have had its name from the statue of Appius Claudius, (that Roman consul who paved the famous way from Rome to Capua) which was set up here. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

† This was another place that stood upon the Appian Way, about thirty miles distant from Rome; and that it was a city properly so called, and not a parcel of inns only for the reception and entertainment of travellers, is evident from its being an Episcopal See in the time of Constantine; for among the nineteen bishops who were delegated by that emperor to decide the controversy between Donatus and Cæcilianus, "Felix à tribus tabernis," Felix, bishop of the city called Tres Tabernæ, was one. And indeed, if we will allow of Scaliger's interpretation of the word Tabernæ, viz. that it was the name of the frontier-towns which were built against the incursions of the barbarians; Zosimus [Hist. l. 2. pt. 65.] acquaints us, that Dioclesian every where erected such, on the borders of the Roman empire, and we have reason to think, that the like was done in earlier times by other emperors; and that therefore the Tres Tabernæ, where the Sauromatæ (as Ausonius tells us) had their habitations assigned them, in order to garrison and defend these places, were such. *Hammond's Annotations*.

‖ This στρατοπιδέχης or chief commander of the emperor's guards, is generally supposed to have been Burrhus, whom Claudius made his prætorian prefect, A. D. 51. He had a great hand in advancing Nero to the empire, and while he lived, had so much influence or authority over him, as to keep his evil inclinations under some sort of restraint; but he died A. D. 62, about two years after St Paul's arrival at Rome, leaving behind him (according to the account of historians) a great reputation for wisdom and moderation. *Echard's Ecclesiastical History*, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

†² The manner of the soldier's guarding the prisoner among the Romans was, by having a chain at one end fastened to the prisoner's right-hand, and at the other to the soldier's left, and this made so long that they might conveniently go together: But sometimes, for greater security, the prisoner was guarded with two soldiers, and so had two chains, one of them made fast to one soldier, and the other to the other, Acts xii. 6, 7. and Acts xxi. 33. *Whitby's* and *Hammond's* Annotations.

‡ Hence it appears, that the edict of Claudius, which banished the Jews from Rome, was of no long continuance, but probably expired with his life; because we find, by St Paul's epistle to the Romans, which he wrote about two years before his going among them, that there were great numbers both of Jews and Christians then residing at Rome. *Beausobre's* Annotations, and *Calmet's Commentary*.

made him famous even in the * emperor's court, where he converted several to Christianity.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

Among other of the apostle's converts at Rome was one † Onesimus, who had formerly been a servant to ‖ Philemon, a person of distinction †² in Colosse, but had run away from his master, and taken things of some value with him. He rambled as far as Rome, where, by St Paul's means, he was converted, instructed, and baptized, and afterwards became highly serviceable to him in his imprisonment. But being another man's servant, he sent him back to Colosse, and, at the same time, wrote ‡ a short

* Among these the Roman martyrology reckons Terpes, an officer of prime note in Nero's palace, and afterwards a martyr for the faith; and St Chrysostom (if Baronius cites him right) tells us of Nero's cup-bearer, and one of his concubines, supposed by some to have been Poppæa Sabina, of whom Tacitus gives us this character:—"That she wanted nothing to make her one of the most accomplished ladies in the world, but a chaste and virtuous mind." And I know not how far it may seem to countenance her conversion, at least inclination to a better religion than that of Paganism, that Josephus styles her a pious woman, and tells us, that she effectually solicited the cause of the Jews with her husband Nero; and what favours Josephus himself received from her at Rome, he relates in his own life. *Cave's Lives of the Apostles.*

† This was no uncommon name given to slaves, and as it signifies in the original *profitable*, the apostle may be supposed to allude to it, when he tells Philemon, concerning this servant of his, "in time past he was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable both to thee and me," Phil. ver. 11. And indeed so he proved: For not long after his return to his master, he was sent back again to Rome, that he might be of service to St Paul in his prison. The epistles which St Paul wrote in his confinement, were by his hand conveyed to their respective churches. After the apostle's release from prison, he was assistant to him in the propagation of the Gospel, and (according to the *Apostolic Constitutions*) was by him made bishop of Berea in Macedonia, where he suffered martyrdom; though others say that he succeeded Timothy in the bishoprick of Ephesus, and that, being taken into custody and carried to Rome, he was there stoned to death for his faith in Jesus Christ. That he was a true convert to Christianity, and a sincere penitent for his private offences, is evident from the appellations which St Paul gives him of his son, the son of his bonds, his own bowels, Phil. ver. 10. 12. and his faithful and beloved brother, Col. iv. 9. but that he was either bishop or martyr, St Chrysostom, St Jerom, and Theodoret, who have all written commentaries upon the epistle to Philemon, make not the least mention. *Calmet's* and *Beausobre's* Pref. sur l'Épître a Philemon.

‖ He was a person of some considerations in Colosse, a city of Phrygia; for his family was there remaining in the time of Theodoret, who flourished in the fifth age of the church. St Paul, we read, was twice in Phrygia, and yet we do not find that he was ever at Colosse; nay, he seems to declare himself that he was never there, Col. ii. 1. and therefore we must

suppose, that either he converted Philemon (as he seems to intimate he did, ver. 19.) at Ephesus, or some other place in Asia Minor, (while he was preaching the Gospel there) or that Epaphras, who was St Paul's disciple, and by him appointed evangelist to the Colossians, was the person who converted him. However this be, it is certain, that upon his conversion he became a fellow-labourer in the Gospel, ver. 1. and (as the *Apostolic Constitutions* tell us) by St Paul was made the bishop of the church of Colosse, which, by his extensive charity, Phil. ver. 5. 6. he edified, as much as by his preaching of the Gospel, until he and his wife Appia both suffered martyrdom in the time of Nero. *Calmet's* and *Beausobre's* Pref. sur l'Épître a Col. et Philemon.

†² This was a great city of Phrygia, in Asia Minor, built by the river Lycus, near the place (as Herodotus informs us, l. 7. c. 30.) where it begins to run under ground, as it does for five furlongs before it rises again, and empties itself into the Meander. This city was situated at an equal distance between Laodicea and Hierapolis, and therefore we find St Paul (in his epistle to the Colossians, chap. iv. 13.) making mention of the inhabitants of all these three cities together; which (according to the account of Eusebius) were all destroyed by an earthquake, in the tenth of Nero, about two years after that this epistle was sent to them. *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*, and *Whitby's Alphabetical Table*.

‡ This epistle may pass for a master-piece of eloquence in the persuasive way. For therein the apostle has recourse to all the considerations which friendship, religion, piety, and tenderness, can inspire, to reconcile a servant to his master; and yet some of the ancients were of opinion, that it did not deserve a place in the canon of Scripture, because it was wrote on a particular occasion, and with a design, not so much to instruct Christians in general, as to recommend a fugitive servant. But though the subject of this epistle be a private affair, yet it contains such general instructions as these: 1st, That no Christian, though of the meanest condition, is to be contemned. 2dly, That Christianity does not impair the power of masters over their servants. 3dly, That servants ought to make satisfaction for any wrong or injury done to their masters. 4thly, That masters ought to be reconciled to their servants, upon their repentance and acknowledgment of their faults: And, 5thly, That there is, at all times, a love and affection due from a master to a profitable servant. And who then (say the Greek interpreters) would refuse to number an epistle, so profitable and so instruc-

A. M. 4066,
&c. or 5473.
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letter to his master, † “ Earnestly desiring him to pardon him, and, notwithstanding his former faults, to treat him kindly, and use him as a brother; and promising withal, that if he had wronged or owed him any thing, he himself would not fail to repay it.”

The Christians of Philippi, having heard of St Paul's imprisonment at Rome, and not knowing what straits he might be reduced to, raised a contribution for him, and sent it by Epaphroditus *, their bishop, by whom he returned an epistle †² to them: “ Wherein he gives some account of the state of his affairs at Rome; gratefully acknowledges their kindness to him; warns them against the dangerous opinions which the Judaizing teachers began to vent among them; and advises them to live in continual obedience to Christ; to avoid disputations, to delight in prayer, to be courageous under afflictions, united in love, and clothed with humility, in imitation of the Blessed Jesus, who so far humbled himself, as to ‘ become obedient to death, even to the death of the cross.’”

St Paul had, for three years, lived at Ephesus, taking great pains in preaching the Gospel, and was thoroughly acquainted with the state and condition of the place; and therefore now, taking the opportunity of Tychicus's ‖ going thither, he wrote his epistle †³ to the Ephesians; “ Wherein he endeavours to countermine the principles

tive, with the rest of St Paul's works? *Chrysost. Argum. Epist. ad Philem. Calmet's, Beausobre's, and Whitby's Pref. ad eandem.*

† For the case of servants in those days was very hard. All masters were looked upon, not only by the Roman laws, but by the laws of all nations, as having an unlimited power over them; so that, without asking the magistrate's leave, or any public or formal trial, they might adjudge them to any work or punishment, even to the loss of life itself, if they pleased. The exorbitancy of this power, however, was, in some measure, curbed by the laws of succeeding emperors, (especially after they became Christians) which make better provision for persons in that relation and capacity, and in case of unjust and over-rigorous usage, enable them to appeal to a more righteous tribunal, where master and servant shall both stand upon even ground, “ where he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no respect of persons,” Col. iii. 25. *Cave's Lives of the Apostles.*

* St Paul calls him the “ apostle of the Philippians,” which some, taking the word *apostle* in its literal sense for a messenger only, do suppose that Epaphroditus is so called, because he was appointed by the Philippians to carry money to St Paul, who was then in prison at Rome, and in their name to be serviceable to him in his person. But Theodoret, and others of the fathers, who have written upon the epistle to the Philippians, tell us, that he was the person *ὃ τῶν Ψυχῶν αὐτῶν ἐπιστεύθη ἐκμελεῖν*, “ to whom the care of their souls had been committed,” and consequently their bishop; for it is more feasible to make him bishop of Philippi than of any other place, as some have done. *Whitby's Preface to the Epistle to the Philippians, and Calmet's Commentary on chap. ii. 25.*

†² Of all the epistles which St Paul wrote, there is none so full of affection and tender sentiments as this to the Philippians, who, (it must be owned) upon

the account of their constancy in the faith, as well as their zeal for the apostle and concern for his sufferings, deserved such kind treatment; and therefore, so far is he from censuring or reproving them, (as he usually does other churches) that we find him abounding in their praise and commendation. A good argument this (as St Chrysostom remarks) of their virtuous behaviour, that they gave their teacher no cause to complain, but that the whole epistle which he sent them contains nothing but kind exhortations and encouragements, without the least mixture of sharpness or reproof. *Beausobre's Preface sur l'Épître aux Philip.*

‖ Tychicus was of the province of Asia, and a disciple of St Paul, whom he frequently employed to carry his letters to several churches, as that to the Colossians, written in 61; that to the Ephesians, written in 65; and the first to Timothy, written in 64. Nor did he employ him merely to carry his letters, but to learn likewise the state of the several churches to which he sent him, and to bring him proper intelligence from thence; and for this reason he calls him his “ dear brother, a faithful minister in the Lord, and his companion in the service of God,” Eph. vi. 21, 22. and Col. iv. 7, 8. For this reason he had once thoughts of sending him to Crete, to preside over that church in the absence of Titus, chap. iii. 12. as it is probably supposed, that when he sent him with his letter to Ephesus, he ordered him to abide there, and to govern that church, while Timothy, their proper bishop, was absent with him at Rome. But when St Paul was restored to his liberty, whether this disciple of his attended him in his travels, or was constituted bishop of Colophon, in the province of Asia, as some report, we have no account that may be depended on. *Calmet's Dictionary under the Word.*

†³ The heretic Marcion (as Tertullian, adv. Mar. lib. v. c. 17. informs us) pretended, that this epistle was not written to the Ephesians, but to the Laodi-

and practices both of the Jews and Gentiles; to confirm them in the belief and obedience of the Christian doctrine; and to instruct them fully in the great mysteries of the Gospel; their redemption and justification by the death of Christ; their gratuitous election; the calling of the Gentiles; their union with the Jews in one body, of which Jesus was the head; and the glorious exaltation of that head above all creatures, both spiritual and temporal, together with many excellent moral precepts, both as to the general duties of religion, and the duties of their particular relations.”

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

St Paul himself had never been at Colosse, but Epaphras *, who was then at Rome a prisoner with him, had preached the Gospel there with good success; and from him he might learn, that certain false teachers had endeavoured to persuade the people, that they ought not to apply to God by Jesus Christ, who, since his ascension, was so far exalted above them, but by angels, who were now become the proper mediators between God and man; and therefore, in opposition to this, as well as some other seductions of the like nature, he wrote his epistle to the Colossians †: “Wherein he magnificently

ceans, for which he produces his own copy, inscribed to the saints, which were at Laodicea, and not at Ephesus, as the generality of manuscripts and versions now have it; and, to support this, several passages are cited out of the epistle itself, which seem not so well to agree with the circumstances of St Paul, who had lived and preached for the space of three years at Ephesus, vid. chap. i. 15. iii. 1. 4. iv. 21. but as it would be rash and imprudent, upon the account of a few ambiguous texts, to deny the authority of all antiquity, and especially that of St Ignatius, who, in his letter to the Ephesians, sect. xii. makes mention of that which St Paul had wrote to them, so (if we are minded to compromise the matter) we may, with Archbishop Usher, say, that this was a circular letter, and designed for the use of all the churches of Asia, inasmuch, that St Paul did not insert the name of any particular church, but sent it with this general title, “Paul the apostle of Jesus Christ, to the saints which are at ———.” But then, as Ephesus was the metropolis of the province, the epistle in most of the copies went under its name; though others there might be (even as late as St Basil’s days) inscribed to no church at all, from whence the Laodiceans might pretend that it belonged originally to them, and Marcion (who was of the kingdom of Pontus, in the confines of Phrygia, wherein Laodicea was) might accordingly cite it under their name. *Calmet’s* and *Beausobre’s*, Preface sur l’Eptre aux Ephesiens.

* While St Paul was preaching in Phrygia, where of Colosse was one of the principal cities; he very likely met with this Epaphras; but when, where, or upon what occasion, he converted him from the heathen to the Christian religion, we nowhere find. This only we know, that, after his own conversion, he contributed very much to that of his fellow-citizens, the inhabitants of Colosse, and that while St Paul was in bonds at Rome, coming, very probably, to pay him a visit, himself was likewise made a prisoner with him for the common cause of Christianity, Philem. ver. 23. Understanding, however, that false teachers, taking the advantage of his absence, had sown tares among the wheat, he engaged St Paul (whose name and authority were revered through all Phrygia) to send a letter to the Colossians, in order to set them right

in matters wherein they were mistaken, and to give them a true knowledge of their false teachers. This the apostle very readily did; and the more to recommend the merit, and support the authority of Epaphras, styles him “his dear fellow-servant, and faithful minister of Christ;” Col. i. 7. being then (as it is said of him) a bishop, and not long after a martyr at Colosse. *Calmet’s* Commentary in locum.

† The better to understand the chief design of this epistle, we may observe, that the followers of Plato always looked upon angels (whom they honoured with the name of demons) as the great Mediators between God and men, who carried up their prayers to him, and reconveyed his blessings to them. To these they committed not only the direction of the stars and elements, but the administration likewise of all sublunary things, and from thence they concluded, that they were to be honoured for the same reason that we usually do honour the governors of provinces, or the chief ministers of any state. The followers of Simon Magus ascribed the creation of the world even to the meanest kind of angels, but those of a superior order they held in the highest veneration: For their master, who (according to his fancy) had stocked the heavens with these intelligences, made it one of his principles, that none could be saved without using such and such mysteries, and sacrificing to the God of all things by the mediation of these celestial powers: Nay, the Jews themselves, after their return from the Babylonish captivity, began to entertain high conceptions of the angels, inasmuch, that, in the prophecy of Daniel, and other books written after that captivity, we find the several orders of them ranged under their proper names; and, among them, there was a famous sect called the Essenes, who, together with other things, obliged themselves to preserve the books which were peculiar to them, and the names of the angels, which they held in great esteem. It is to be observed farther, that among the Jews there were several sects very superstitious in their abstinences; that the Essenes denied themselves the use of wine; the Nazarenes held it a crime to eat flesh; and the Therapeutæ would drink nothing but water, and made bread and salt their common food; except some more delicate persons (as they called

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&c. or 3473.
Ann. Dom.
62. &c.

sets forth the Messiah, and all the benefits flowing from him, as being the image of his Father, the Redeemer of all mankind, the reconciler of all things to God, and the head of the church, which gives life and vigour to all its members; wherein he commends the doctrine preached to them by Epaphras, and exhorts them not to be led away by the reasonings of human philosophy, by the superstitious practices of making differences of meats and drinks, or by a pretended humility, in worshipping angels; and wherein he gives them an abstract of many chief and principal duties of the Christian life, especially such as respect the relations of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants."

While St Paul was thus laudably employed in his confinement at Rome, James, the bishop of Jerusalem, was not idle; but thinking it belonged to his apostolical office to take care of all the converted among the twelve tribes of Israel, wherever dispersed, he wrote an epistle to them, which, among those that are called * Catholic, is placed first in the sacred canon, and was designed "to suppress and confute a dangerous error, then growing up in the church, viz. that a bare naked faith was sufficient to secure mens salvation, without any attention to good works; to comfort Christians under the persecutions, which were going to be raised against them † by worldly powers; and to awaken them out of their stupidity, when judgments were ready to overtake them." To this purpose, he inserts in his epistle many excellent exhortations, such as, "to bear afflictions, to hear the word of God, to mortify their lusts, to bridle their tongues, to avoid

them), who used honey and hysop. From all which it seems very probable, that the Essenes, who were reputed the philosophers of the Jews, or some other sects of the like nature, having embraced the Christian religion, were for engaging others in the worship of angels, the observation of the Jewish ceremonies, and some particular abstinences, wherein they placed a great deal of perfection. For, though this doctrine of worshipping angels might originally be derived from the Platonists, yet since they, who at this time held it, added some Jewish observances, they are rather to be reckoned among the scholars of Simon Magus, or of some opinionated Jews, who were for mixing the law and the Gospel together, and these were the heretics whom St Paul in this epistle sets himself to oppose. *Beausobre's* Preface sur l'Epitre aux Colos. and *Echard's* Ecclesiastical History, lib. ii. c. 6.

* Ever since the fourth century, this epistle of St James, the two of St Peter, three of St John, and that of St Jude, have obtained the name of Catholic, because they are directed to all the faithful, and not to any particular church as those of St Paul are; and this may suggest a reason why this epistle of St James in particular did not at first meet with a general reception. For, being in the nature of a circular letter, and addressed to no one church who might take care to preserve it, and promote its pretensions, it might be some time before it obtained its place in the canon; and that the rather, because there seemed to be some contradiction between the doctrine advanced in it, viz. "that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only," chap. ii. ver. 24. and that in St Paul's epistle to the Romans, "that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law," chap. iii. ver. 28. which might give some unskilful readers, not sufficiently attentive to the scope of each apostle, some umbrage of suspicion. *Whitby's* and *Beau-*

sobre's Preface to the epistle of St James.

† From the history of the Acts we learn, that about the 39th year of Christ, the churches had peace throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, ch. ix. ver. 31. and so they seem to have continued till after the council of Jerusalem, when they are said to be established in faith, and to increase in numbers daily, Acts xvi. 5. Nay, when St Paul was at Rome, he received all that came in to him for two whole years, preaching the kingdom of God with all confidence, no man forbidding him, Acts xxviii. 30, 31. So that at least, till the 4th or 5th year of Nero, the Gospel was freely preached at Rome without any opposition, either from the Romans or the Jews. But then, in the 6th year of this emperor's reign, the Christians were subjected to punishments, (as Suetonius in Neron. c. 16. tells us) and it seems very probable, says Dr Lightfoot, that even then Nero had, by some public act or edict, suppressed Christianity, not only at Rome, but also in Judea, as he gathers from that passage in Tacitus. "Repressoque in præsens exitibilis superstitio rursus erumpebat, non modo per Judæam, originem ejus mali, sed per urbem etiam," which shews, that before the persecution began in the 10th of Nero, (of which Tacitus here speaks) Christianity had been by him suppressed; not at Rome only, but in Judea. In the 10th of his reign he renewed his persecution of the Christians, and this he did not only at Rome, but through all the provinces of his empire, which encouraged the Jews every where to shew their utmost rage against all those of their religion who had embraced the faith of Christ; and the nearer they drew to their final dissolution, the more did Satan inflame their rage and malice against those Christians, whom he found to be the fatal enemies and overthrowers of his kingdom. *Whitby's* Preface to the Epistle of St James.

cursing and swearing, and to adorn their Christian profession with a good conversation with meekness, peaceableness, and charity." But it was not long before a period was put to all his labours; for the governing part of the Jews, being highly enraged at the disappointment of their malice against St Paul, by his appealing to Cæsar, were now resolved to revenge it upon St James; and, accordingly, taking the opportunity of the death of Festus, before the arrival of his successor Albinus, Annas or Ananas, the high priest, summoned James and some others before the Sanhedrim, requiring them to renounce the Christian faith. Their desire more especially was, that the apostle should make his renunciation in the most public manner, and therefore they carried him up to the battlements of the temple, and threatened to cast him down thence in case of refusal. But when, instead of gratifying their desires, he began himself to confess, and to exhort others to confess the faith of Christ, in the presence of those who came to hear his recantation, they ordered him to be thrown down headlong from the place where he stood. By this fall he was sadly bruised, though not quite killed; and therefore, getting upon his knees, he was praying for his murderers, in the manner of the protomartyr St Stephen, when, as the rabble was loading him with a shower of stones, one of them, more mercifully cruel than the rest, with a fuller's club beat out his brains: A fact altogether so black and barbarous, that even their * own historian Josephus could not but condemn it, and (as himself testifies) all the honest and conscientious part of the city remonstrated against it, both to their king Agrippa, and to the Roman governor Albinus; insomuch, that the high priest, by whose authority it was committed, was, in a few months, degraded, and another put in his place: But † the blessed martyr was buried in a tomb of his own building on Mount Olivet, and, by the general voice, his own brother Simon was appointed his successor in the bishopric of Jerusalem.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

By what means St Paul was delivered from his imprisonment, and discharged from the accusation which the Jews brought against him, we have no account in history; but may presume, that, having not sufficient proof of what they alleged, or being informed, that what they alleged was no violation of any Roman law, they durst not implead him before the emperor, and so permitted him to be discharged in course. But before he left Italy, he wrote his famous and most elaborate || epistle to the Hebrews, i. e. to the

* The words of Josephus are these,—“ This was so surprising a way of proceeding to all the honest and conscientious part of the city, that they presently sent king Agrippa private notice of it, as a very ill thing done, with a request that Ananas might have a check for it, and a caution never to do any such thing for the future; whilst others were sent with an account of it to Albinus, who was then upon his journey to Alexandria, representing it as an usurpation and encroachment upon his authority, and what ought not to have been done without his consent; whereupon the governor sent him an angry and menacing letter, and king Agrippa, at the end of three months, removed him from his office of high priest, and gave it to Jesus the son of Damnaeus.”

Antiquities, lib. xx. c. 8.

† He was a man of extraordinary piety and devotion, educated under the strictest rules of religion, and a priest (as some imagine) of the order of the Rechabites, or rather (as Epiphanius conjectures) of the most ancient form of priesthood, when the sacerdotal office was the prerogative of the first-born; and therefore it is said, that he wore a plate of gold, or probably a mitre upon his head, as the ensign of

his dignity. Prayer was his daily business and delight; so constant was he at his devotions, that his knees became hard and callous as a camel's, and so prevalent in his petitions to heaven, that in time of great drought he prayed for rain, and obtained it. Nor was his piety towards God more remarkable than his charity, his humility, his temperance, and universal goodness, which made him the love and wonder of the age, and gained him the character and title of James the Just, or (as it is in the Syriac) of Oblas, i. e. the defence and fortress of the people, as if the safety and happiness of the whole nation depended upon his prayers and interest with heaven. In short, he was the delight of all good men, and so much in the favour and estimation of the people, that they used to flock after him, and strive who should touch, though it were but the hem of his garment. Nor was he only loved and honoured by his friends, but held in great veneration by his enemies, insomuch, that some of the wisest of them looked upon his martyrdom as an inlet to all those miseries and calamities which soon after flowed in upon them.

Cave's Lives of the Apostles.

|| That this epistle was of ancient date, and written

A. M. 4067,
&c. or 5474.
Ann. Dom.
63, &c.

converted Jews dwelling in Jerusalem and Judea, "Wherein his main design is to magnify Christ, and the religion of the Gospel, above Moses and the Jewish economy, that by this means he may the better establish the converted Jews in the belief and profession of Christianity: Wherein, to this purpose, he represents our Saviour, in his Divine nature, far superior to all angels, and all created beings; and, in his mediatorial capacity, a greater Lawgiver than Moses; a greater Priest than Aaron; and a greater King and Priest than Melchisedec: Wherein he shews, that the ceremonies, the sacrifices, and the observances of the law, could have no virtue in themselves, but only as they were types of Jesus Christ; and, being now accomplished in his person, and by his ministry, were finally and totally abolished: Wherein he insists upon the necessity of faith, and, by the examples of the patriarchs and prophets, proves, that justification is to be had no other way than by the merits of a dying Saviour; and wherein, lastly, he mingles many excellent precepts for the regulation of their lives; exhortations to trust and confidence in Christ in all their sufferings; and strict cautions against apostacy from his religion in the hottest persecutions."

Having thus discharged his ministry, both by preaching and writing in Italy, St Paul, in company with Timothy, prosecuted his long-intended journey into Spain, and it is probably thought, that from thence he came over, and * preached the Gospel in Britain. After he had continued about eight or nine months in these western parts, he returned again eastward, and, leaving both Sicily and Greece, arrived at Crete, where he constituted Titus bishop of the island, and then went with Timothy into Judea to visit the Christians there.

In what manner St Peter employed his time, after his escape out of prison, we have

before the destruction of the temple, and abolition of the Jewish worship, is manifest from the author's making no mention of these events, which, had they been passed, he would not have omitted, as being one of the best arguments that could be produced for the support of his main doctrine, the abrogation of the Levitical sacrifices and priesthood; nor could we find it quoted so frequently in St Clement's letter to the Corinthians, which seems to have been wrote before the downfall of Jerusalem, had it not been of a date prior to that time. It is not to be questioned then, but that this epistle to the Hebrews was extant in the apostolic age; but who its author was, we find both ancients and moderns in great dispute. Some ascribed it to St Barnabas, others to Clemens Romanus, others to St Luke, and others again to Apollos, who, in the Sacred History, is styled "an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures," Acts xviii. 24. If, however, we look into the epistle itself, we shall find, that the character can agree with none so well as St Paul: For as it appears that this epistle was in being before the destruction of Jerusalem, and while the Jews had power enough to oppress the Christians in Judea; that the person who wrote it was well versed in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and the most abstruse parts of Jewish theology; that he represents himself as lately in prison, but at that time set at liberty, and hoping speedily to come and see them; that he mentions Timothy, whom he calls his brother, as being likewise released, and ready to accompany him in his journey, Hebr. xiii. 23.; that he commends those to whom he writes, for "having had compassion of him in his bonds, and taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods," chap. x. 34.; that he requests them

to "pray for him, that he might be restored to them sooner," chap. xiii. 18, 19.; and, lastly, that this epistle was written from Rome, as some manuscripts have it, or from Italy, as we find it in others; we cannot but allow, that each of these is a strong argument that this epistle was written by St Paul, because they accord so exactly with his circumstances at this time above any one's else. But then, if we add to this the testimony of the ancients, especially of St Peter, who, in his second epistle to the Jewish converts, mentions a certain letter which St Paul had wrote to them, distinct from all his other epistolary writings, 2 Peter iii. 15, 16. which can be no other than that which bears the name of the epistle to the Hebrews, we can no longer doubt of its being the composition of St Paul; and an original composition too, since it has in it none of that constraint which is visible in a translation, nor any of those Hebrew phrases which occur so frequently in the version of the Septuagint. *Beausobre's* and *Whitby's* Preface to the Epistle to the Hebrews.

* Clemens, in his famous epistle to the Corinthians, expressly tells us, that, being a preacher both in the east and west, he taught righteousness to the whole world, and went to the utmost bounds of the west; and Theodoret and others inform us, that he preached not only in Spain, but went to other nations, and brought the Gospel into the isles of the sea, by which he undoubtedly means Britain: And therefore he elsewhere reckons the Gauls and Britons among the people whom the apostles, and particularly the tent-maker (as he calls him), persuaded to embrace the law of Christ. *Cave's* Lives of the Apostles.

no certain account; but it is generally agreed, that, about the second year of the emperor Claudius, he went to Rome, and there continued until that emperor, taking the advantage of some seditions and tumults raised by the Jews, by a public edict banished them from Rome. Upon this occasion St Peter returned back to Jerusalem, and was present at the great apostolic synod, whereof we have given some account before. How he disposed of himself after this, we are left under great uncertainties, though the current opinion is, that after he had visited the several churches which he had planted in the east, and carried the glad tidings of the Gospel into Africa, Sicily, Italy, and even as far as Britain, making great numbers of converts in all places; towards the latter end of Nero's reign he returned to Rome, where he found † the minds of the people strangely bewitched and hardened against Christianity, by the subtilities and magical arts of Simon Magus, whom he had formerly defeated at Samaria.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

Provoked at this general infatuation, the apostle thought himself concerned to oppose this sorcerer; and having *, in some instances, discovered the vanity of his impostures, he wrought him up at length to such a pitch of madness and desperation, that, to give the people an evident demonstration of his being the Son of God (as he pretended) he promised, that on such a day he would ascend visibly up into heaven. Accordingly, at the time appointed, he went up to the mount of the capitol, and, throwing himself from the top of the rock, began his flight, and, by the help of some infernal powers, seemed to be posting to heaven; when, immediately upon the apostle's prayer to God, that the people might be undeceived, and the cheat detected, his invisible supporters withdrew, and †² down he came headlong, so miserably bruised and wounded with his fall, that in a short time after he expired.

† Justin Martyr assures us, that this impostor was honoured as a deity; that a statue was erected to him in the Insula Tyberina, with this inscription, SIMONI DEO SANCTO, which is confirmed by the testimony of Irenæus, Tertullian, and several others after them. Whatever therefore may be said to shake the credit of this inscription, it can hardly be thought that Justin Martyr, who was a person of great learning and gravity, inquisitive about things of this nature, and at this time at Rome, where he might fully satisfy himself of the truth of it, would have inserted any thing in his apology to the emperor and the senate of Rome, but what he knew would bear the test; and yet he speaks twice of this statue, and desires of them, that if, upon enquiry, they should find what he said to be true, they would abolish it. *Cave's Lives of the Apostles*, and *Whitby's Preface to the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians*.

* A noble instance of this kind we have in Hege-sippus the Younger. "There was at this time, says he, in Rome, a gentleman of some note, a kinsman to the emperor, lately dead. Those who knew St Peter's power in working miracles, advised his friends to send for him, and others likewise prevailed, that Simon the magician might be sent for. Glad of this occasion to magnify himself before the people, Simon propounded to Peter, that if he raised the man to life, Peter, who had reviled the mighty power of God (as he styled himself), should lose his life; but that, if Peter prevailed, he would submit to the same penalty. Peter accepted the challenge; and when Simon began his charms and enchantments, the dead body seemed to move his hand: Whereupon the people who stood by, thinking that the person was alive, were going to fall

foul upon Peter for daring to oppose so great a power. But Peter, entreating their patience, desired only that the magician might be removed from the bed-side; which when they had done, the deception vanished, and the body remained without the least sign of motion. Then Peter, standing at a good distance from the bed, silently made his addresses to heaven, and when he had so done, in the presence of them all, commanded the man, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to arise, which he instantly did; so that the people, changing their minds, were going to stone the magician, but that Peter interposed for his life, by telling them, that it would be punishment enough to him to live and see, that, in despite of all his power and malice, the kingdom of Christ would increase and flourish." *Cave's Lives of the Apostles*.

†² It must be owned, that the truth of this whole transaction between St Peter and Simon Magus has been greatly suspected, not only upon the account of the small authority of those apocryphal writers, from whom it was first taken, but by reason of the great disagreement likewise which appears in their relation of the several circumstances of it. For, whereas some of them say, that Simon Magus made himself wings to fly with; others affirm, that he was invisibly held up by two devils; others, that he made himself a chariot; and others again, that he ascended a fiery one drawn by four horses, but all done by the art of magic: and whereas, some say that by his fall he crushed his whole body to pieces; and others, that he dashed out his brains; others aver, that he only broke a thigh, a leg, or an arm; and this done in the reign of Claudius, according to some; but in the reign of Nero, according to others; by Peter

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Nero, the emperor, was a professed patron of magicians, and of all such as maintained a secret commerce with the infernal powers. He had a particular dislike to the doctrine of Christianity likewise, as being so very repugnant to the lusts and passions which he indulged; and was not a little offended at the many conversions which St Peter had made, in persons of some distinction, from a vicious and dissolute course of life, which the emperor admired in any: So that he not only commanded him and St Paul (who was at this time at Rome) to be apprehended and cast into prison, but, by a public edict, raised the † first general persecution against the church, wherein Christians of all orders and degrees were * treated with the utmost contempt and cruelty.

In this common calamity, Andrew, the apostle, and (as most think) the younger brother of St Peter, was called to suffer. He, having preached the Gospel, wrought many miracles, and suffered many hardships in the wild northern countries of Scythia and Sogdiana, and after that, in some of the provinces of the Lesser Asia, came at length into †² Epirus and Achaia ||, two provinces of Greece, where he still added more con-

alone, as some will have it; but by Peter and Paul in conjunction, according to the report of others. Nor is it a small discredit to this story, that the ancients of the three first centuries, who speak much of Simon's being at Rome, and having his statue erected there, should say nothing of his flight or his fall, though they had just reason to speak of them, had they believed them true: "Nor is it credible," (saith Hornius) "that all the Roman writers of those times, Suetonius, Tacitus, Pliny, &c. should pass over so memorable a thing in silence," especially if Simon was so honoured by Claudius, and beloved by Nero, as some authors of this story say he was. This is the substance of what is alleged against it; and yet, according to others, it is fully attested by the Apostolic Constitutions; hinted at in the recognitions, taken for a known fact by such as lived nearest to Rome, viz. Araobius, Ambrosius, and St Jerom de Script. Eccles. fully mentioned by Eusebius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, and many others; contradicted by no one ecclesiastical writer, and yet supposed to be alluded to in that passage of Suetonius, where he tells us, that Icarus, "primo statim conatu juxta cubiculum Neronis decidit, ipsumque cruores resperxit," i. e. "Icarus," or one that flew in the air, "in his first attempt, fell down near the emperor's pavilion; and sprinkled his blood upon him." *Whitby's* Preface to the 2d Epistle to the Thessalonians, and *Whiston's* Answer to the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion.

† Before the Roman empire was converted to Christianity, there are commonly reckoned ten general persecutions. The first in the 10th year of Nero, A. D. 64. the second in the 14th of Domitian, A. D. 95. the third in the 3d of Trajan, A. D. 100. the fourth in the 2d of Antoninus Philosophus, A. D. 165. the fifth in the 4th of Severus, A. D. 197. the sixth in the 1st of Maximinus, 235. the seventh in the 1st of Decius, A. D. 249. the eighth in the 4th of Valerian, A. D. 257. the ninth in the 4th of Aurelian, A. D. 274. and the tenth in the 19th of Dioclesian, A. D. 303. till at length Christianity came to be established by human laws, A. D. 313. *Echard's* Ecclesiastical History.

* As to the particulars of this persecution, Tacitus

tells us, that at first several were seized, who made profession of this new religion, and, by their confession, infinite numbers of others were detected, and executed, and, in the manner of their execution, were treated with all the instances of scorn and barbarity. Some of them were wrapt up in the skins of wild beasts, and worried and devoured by dogs; others were crucified; and others burnt alive, in paper coats dipped in pitch, wax, and other combustible matters, that when day-light failed, they might serve for torches, and illuminations in the night. Nero exhibited these spectacles in his own gardens, impiously joining to them the diversions of the cirque, and appearing himself publicly in the habit of a charioteer, sitting in his chariot, which yet the people entertained more with pity than pleasure, as knowing they were not done for the public benefit, but merely to gratify the tyrant's private rage and malice. *Echard's* Ecclesiastical History, l. i. c. 7.

†² This is a province of Greece, in its largest acceptation, lying along the coast of the Ionian Sea, and having for its bounds on the north, Albania; on the north-east, Thessaly; on the south-east, Achaia; and on the west, the Ocean. This country was anciently governed by its own princes, then united to the kingdom of Macedon; after that subjected to the Romans; then restored to its own princes; but is now in the possessions of the Turks, except some few places which the Venetians regained in a late war. *The Complete Geographer*.

|| The ancient name of this country was Hellas, which the Latins changed into Græcia, and the Turks now call Rumelia. It was used by common writers to denote Macedonia, Epirus, Thessaly, Hellas, or Greece properly so called, and the Peloponnese, now Morea; but the Romans distinguished all these into two provinces only, viz. Macedonia and Achaia, under the former of which they comprehended Epirus and Thessaly, and under the latter, Greece, properly so called, and the Peloponnese. The word Greece, in the Old Testament, generally occurs in its larger acceptation; and in its less in the New: But as for the country itself, it was anciently the most celebrated region of the universe, surpassing all others in arms, arts, and sciences. For many ages it

verts to the Christian faith. At last, in † Patræa, a city of Achaia, Ægeas, the pro-consul, observing the multitudes that, by the apostle's preaching, had fallen off from Paganism and embraced Christianity, and being not a little offended at his opposing his mandates for the re-establishment of idolatry, and undauntedly persisting in his publication of the doctrine of a crucified Saviour, condemned him to the death which he so much extolled. After seven lictors therefore had cruelly torn his naked body, he was led out with great cheerfulness and serenity of mind to be crucified. But his cross was not of the usual form: It was made of two pieces of timber, crossing each other in the middle, in the shape of the letter X, (which ever since has been known by the name of St Andrew's cross) and to this he was fastened, not with nails, but cords, to make his death more painful and lingering. In this condition he hung for the space of three days, all the while teaching and instructing the people; exhorting them to constancy and perseverance in that religion which he had delivered to them; and when great intercessions were made to the proconsul for his life, earnestly requesting of our Lord in prayer, that he might on that day (which was the last of November) depart, and seal the truth of his religion †² with his blood.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

How the two apostles Peter and Paul escaped out of prison from the rage of this persecution, we have no account*; but from the writings of the latter, some have gathered, that returning from Rome into Judea, and there continuing a short time, he thence passed into Asia, where Timothy met him at Ephesus; that from thence he made a visit to the Colossians, whom he had never seen before; and after a considerable stay, returning to Ephesus again, (a) excommunicated Hymeneus *² and Alexan-

der the reign of Nero, when they both suffered martyrdom. St Paul, indeed, was twice a prisoner there; but that St Peter was twice a prisoner likewise, seems to rest on no other evidence, than that, as his first epistle is dated from Babylon; by which Rome is supposed to be meant, and as a considerable portion of time is supposed to have elapsed between the writing of his first and his second epistle, he must have been in Rome before the reign of Nero. It has been shown however by Michaelis, that the *Babylon* from which he dates his first epistle was certainly either the ancient Babylon on the Euphrates, which was even then a populous city, or *Seleucia* on the Tigris, sometimes called New Babylon; and it is indeed in the highest degree improbable in itself, that any man would date a serious epistle from any place designed by a *mystical* name, by which that place is not generally known. It seems therefore little less than certain, that St Peter did not go to Rome till some time after St Paul's liberation from his first imprisonment there, about the year 63 or 64; and that his first epistle was written at least some years before that period.] *Michaelis's* Introduction, vol. iv. and *Lardner's* Supplement.

† This city is seated on a hill near the sea, at a little distance from the mountain formerly called Cerynea, and not above ten miles from the mouth of the gulph Lepanto. It is a place of good trade, very populous, especially of Jews. It is defended with a strong castle, and has the honour to be an archbishop's see, which has at present, a thousand churches under its jurisdiction. In ancient times the goddess Diana was worshipped here in a cruel manner, having a most beautiful young man and maid every year sacrificed to her, till, by the preaching of St Andrew, Eurypilus was converted to Christianity, and then that horrid superstition was laid aside. *The Complete Geographer*.

†² His body, being taken down from the cross and embalmed, was decently and honourably interred by Maximilla, a lady of great quality and fortune; but afterwards, by Constantine the Great, it was solemnly removed from Patræa to Constantinople, and there buried in a great church which he had built in honour of all the apostles. *Cave's Lives*.

* [It does not appear to me that St Peter and St Paul were ever prisoners together at Rome but un-

der the reign of Nero, when they both suffered martyrdom. St Paul, indeed, was twice a prisoner there; but that St Peter was twice a prisoner likewise, seems to rest on no other evidence, than that, as his first epistle is dated from Babylon; by which Rome is supposed to be meant, and as a considerable portion of time is supposed to have elapsed between the writing of his first and his second epistle, he must have been in Rome before the reign of Nero. It has been shown however by Michaelis, that the *Babylon* from which he dates his first epistle was certainly either the ancient Babylon on the Euphrates, which was even then a populous city, or *Seleucia* on the Tigris, sometimes called New Babylon; and it is indeed in the highest degree improbable in itself, that any man would date a serious epistle from any place designed by a *mystical* name, by which that place is not generally known. It seems therefore little less than certain, that St Peter did not go to Rome till some time after St Paul's liberation from his first imprisonment there, about the year 63 or 64; and that his first epistle was written at least some years before that period.] *Michaelis's* Introduction, vol. iv. and *Lardner's* Supplement.

(a) 1 Tim. i. 20.

*² This Hymeneus was, very probably, a citizen of Ephesus, who, being converted by some of St Paul's first sermons, fell afterwards into the heresy of those who denied the resurrection of the body, and affirmed that there was no other resurrection than that of the soul, which, by faith and baptism, is revived from sin to grace. The Alexander who was his colleague in this heresy, was doubtless the copper-smith, whom St Paul, in his second epistle to Timothy, loudly complains of, as greatly obstructing the good effect of his

A. M. 4068,
&c. or 5475.
Ann. Dom.
64, &c.

der, for denying the resurrection of the dead and other articles of faith; that from thence, designing to go into Macedonia, he enjoined Timothy, whom (as we said before) he had constituted bishop of Ephesus, (a) to have his residence in that large city, and to take the charge of all the proconsular Asia; that arriving in Macedonia, (b) he visited Philippi, where he stayed a considerable while, and from hence, very probably, sent his first epistle || to Timothy; (c) "Wherein he lays down the duties and qualifications of a bishop, as well in respect of his ministry as of his private conversation, and instructs him in the office of a true Christian pastor."

From Macedonia St Paul, intending to remove to Nicopolis * in Epirus, there to pass his winter, wrote his epistle † to Titus, then in Crete, to meet him there; "Where-

preaching, chap. iv. 14. but whether he was the same Alexander who would have addressed himself to the multitude, which Demetrius the silver-smith of Ephesus had drawn together, Acts xix. 24. is a matter of some doubt. However this be, it is certain, that their notion of no other resurrection than a spiritual one, was destructive of the very foundations of Christianity, which are laid in the hopes of a resurrection from the dead; and therefore the apostle thought it expedient to have them excommunicated, i. e. separated from the society of the faithful, and deprived of the privileges of being present at religious assemblies, of partaking of the Lord's supper, and joining in such other holy offices as linked Christians together in one and the same society and communion. *Whitby's* Annotations on 2 Tim. ii. 17. iv. 14. and *Calmet's* Dictionary under the word.

(a) 1 Tim. i. 3.

(b) Philip i. 25, 26.

|| Among the learned there is no small disagreement as to the time when this epistle was written. That it was written after St Paul's departure from Ephesus to Macedonia, some have gathered from these words, "When I went into Macedonia, I besought thee to abide at Ephesus," 1 Tim. i. 3. And that it was written when he was in expectation of returning shortly thither, they conclude from these, "I write to thee, hoping to come to thee quickly." 1 Timothy iii. 14. From whence they argue, that it must have been written before he came to Miletus, because there he seems to have laid all thoughts of returning any more to Ephesus; as he tells the clergy of that place, "And I know that all you, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more," Acts xx. 25. And therefore they conclude that it was written while he was in Macedonia, i. e. in the first of Nero, and in the year of our Lord 55. Others allow indeed, that this epistle was written after that St Paul was gone into Macedonia; but then they contend, that this journey into Macedonia was none of those that are recorded in the Acts of the apostles. In his first journey Timothy went with him, but then the apostle had never seen Ephesus, Acts xvi. 10, &c. In his second, though he went from Ephesus, yet so far was he from leaving Timothy there, that he sent him and Erastus before him, Acts xix. 21, 22. And in the third, he did not go from Ephesus, but from Greece into Macedonia, whence Timothy accompanied him, first to Jerusalem, and then to Rome, Acts xx. 3, 4. So that there could be no possibility for St Paul to leave

Timothy at Ephesus, while himself departed into Macedonia, till after the time of his return from Rome. They therefore suppose, that after he was released from his confinement he returned into Asia, and having made some stay at Ephesus, went from thence into Macedonia; that this is the time when he besought Timothy to abide still at Ephesus, and consequently that this epistle was written to him about the 10th of Nero, and in the year of our Lord 63. For since, in the course of the history of the Acts (which extends as far as St Paul's imprisonment), we can find no room to place this epistle, we must necessarily refer it to the time which was subsequent to his releasement, and when he went to revisit the churches which he had planted in the east. *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Preface to the First Epistle to Timothy. [See likewise *Marsh's* Michaelis, vol. iv.]

(c) 1 Tim. passim.

* Nicopolis, by the Turks called Sciltaro, stands on the Danube, at the mouth of the Iatrus or Ischar, twenty-five miles north from Silistria. It was built by the emperor Trajan, in memory of his victory over king Decebalus; and near this place Sigismund king of Hungary was unfortunately defeated by Bajazet the Turkish emperor, A. D. 1136, which was owing more to the divisions among the Christians than the bravery of the Turks; for of the latter there fell sixty thousand, but of the former only twenty, as history relates. [There were many cities called *Nicopolis*; but it is self-evident that the Nicopolis built by Trajan could not be the city from which St Paul wrote to Titus. Michaelis thinks, and his opinion is at least as probable as any other that I have met with, that Nicopolis in Epire, which was built by Augustus, in memory of his victory over Antony, was that city. The same learned author seems to have proved that the epistle to Titus was written some time before St Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, and before he wrote his second epistle to the Corinthians.] *The Complete Geographer*, and *Marsh's* Michaelis, vol. iv.

† There is some dispute among the learned concerning the time when this epistle was written. That it was written after the time that St Paul had left Titus at Crete, Titus i. 5. cannot be denied; but then the question is, when St Paul was at Crete, since in all the Acts of the Apostles we find no footsteps of his being there. In his voyage to Rome, indeed, the vessel in which he sailed touched at the Fair Havens belonging to Crete; but as that was no commodious

in he describes to him (as he had done to Timothy) the qualifications which a bishop ought to have, and more especially a bishop of Crete, where some sharpness and severity was necessary, amidst a people of their perverse and obstinate tempers; wherein he admonishes him not to suffer the flock committed to his charge to be led away by the delusions of Judaizing Christians; and wherein he lays down precepts for people of all conditions of life, even not forgetting servants, because Jesus Christ has poured out his grace upon all men.”

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

From Nicopolis (as soon as winter was over) St Paul went a third time to Corinth, where (a) he appointed Erastus to continue: Thence crossing the sea into Asia, he came to Ephesus, where, upon his departure, he left Timothy in tears, and so proceeded to Miletum, where he left Trophimus sick. From Miletum he travelled northward to Troas, and lodged with Carpus †, one of his disciples, where (b) he left his cloak ‡, some books, and parchment-rolls; and, in all probability, about this time it was that he suffered those persecutions and afflictions at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, (c) whereof he makes mention to Timothy, and thanks God for his deliverance from them. But though God was pleased to deliver him from these afflictions, yet it was not long before he discovered to him the near approach of his death, and gave him to know particularly, that at Rome he was to suffer martyrdom; which was so

harbour, she soon set sail from thence, in hopes to make Phenice, another port in the same island, but by contrary winds was drove another way. Whether St Paul, at this time, had Titus in company with him it nowhere appears: but the short stay which he made at the Fair Havens (which was only to consult whether they should winter there or not), will not permit us to think, (especially considering, that at this time he was a prisoner in bonds) either that he attempted to preach the Gospel there, or that he had any occasion to leave Titus in the island, “to set in order the things that were wanting, and to ordain elders in every city.” As therefore we said before, in relation to the epistle to Timothy, viz. that after St Paul was restored to his liberty he returned into the East to visit the churches which he had planted; in his voyage from Rome to Jerusalem he might conveniently enough call at Crete; after he had staid and preached some time there, leave Titus behind him, to regulate such matters as he had not time and opportunity himself to do, and in a year or two after (i. e. in the 12th of Nero, and of our Lord 65.) send him this letter to renew his instructions, and to request his company. For, that this epistle was written after the apostle had obtained his discharge, is manifest from his making no mention of his bonds and temptations, as he does in his epistle to the Ephesians chap. vi. 20.; to the Philippians i. 7.; to the Colossians iv. 18.; to Philemon ver. 9.; and in his second to Timothy chap. i. 8.; and whoever compares this epistle to Titus with the two to Timothy, will find such an affinity in their subjects, the same sentiments, and the same instructions, occasioned by the same set of men who began now to appear in the East, and spread their fables and impostures every where, as will easily convince him that they were all written much about the same time, though the first to Timothy, seems to be of prior date to that to Titus, even as that to Titus may be thought to precede the second to Timothy. In relation to Titus (for this is the

last time we shall meet with him in our history), after having preached the Gospel in Dalmatia, 2 Tim. iv. 10. he is said to have returned into Crete; to have propagated the Christian religion in the neighbouring islands; and, dying in the ninety-fourth year of his age, and being buried in Crete, to have had the cathedral church of the island dedicated to his name. *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Preface to the Epistle to Titus, *Calmet's* Commentary, and the preceding Note.

(a) 2 Tim. iv. 20.

‡ We know very little of the life of Carpus, only that he must be a different person from St Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, and from that other Carpus, whom the false Dionysius, in his letter to Demophilus makes mention of. The Greeks tell us a great many particulars of him which are far from being certain. They affirm, that he was one of the seventy disciples; that he propagated the truth in several places; that he wrought abundance of miracles; that he was St Paul's assistant in preaching the Gospel, and was employed by him in carrying his epistles. They make him bishop of Beræa, and say that he died in peace. *Calmet's* Commentary and Dictionary under the Word.

(b) 2 Tim. iv. 13.

† What we are to understand by St Paul's cloak, will best be resolved in our answers to the following objections. We have only to observe here,—That the time when he left this cloak, was not when he went from Troas to Assos in his journey to Jerusalem, for then (as Bishop Pearson says) he could have no cause to leave any thing of moment, having so many to accompany him in his journey, as well as a ship to attend him, Acts xx. 4. 6. 13. but it was in his travels, after he was set at liberty, and had left Rome, or rather in his return to Rome again, that, in the hurry of his departure, he left some things with Carpus, which he afterwards found he wanted. *Whitby's* Annotations, and *Calmet's* Commentary.

(c) 2 Tim. iii. 11.

A. M. 4069,
&c. or 5476.
Ann. Dom.
65, &c.

far from retarding, that it made him hasten his journey with joy and alacrity to that place.

It was about the twelfth or thirteenth year of Nero's reign when he came to Rome the second time, where, meeting and joining with Peter, they both used their utmost endeavours to instruct the Jews in their synagogues, and to convert the Gentiles in all public places and assemblies. This soon raised the malice and indignation of the magistrates, especially of the governor (*d*) Helius, whom Nero, at his departure into Greece, left invested with exorbitant powers, which he exercised after as exorbitant a manner. It was crime enough for these two apostles that they were Christians; but the particular prejudice against Peter is said to have been his defeating Simon Magus, and that against Paul, his converting one of the emperor's concubines. However this be, apprehended they both were, and cast into prison, where they spent their time in the most solemn acts of devotion, and, as occasion offered, preached the Gospel to their guards and fellow-prisoners, among whom it is said that they converted Processus and Martinian, two captains of the guard, with seven and forty others.

During the time of the apostle's confinement, St Peter wrote his second general epistle * to the converted Jews who were dispersed in the several provinces of Asia; "Wherein he endeavours, by earnest exhortations, to prevail with them to persevere in the doctrine which they had received, and to testify the soundness and sincerity of their faith, by a Christian life comporting therewith: Wherein he forewarns them of the false teachers † that would shortly spring up among them; foretels their sad and miserable destruction; and describes them by their odious characters, that they might avoid them: Wherein he vindicates the doctrine of Christ's coming to judgment, which the heretics of those times denied, that thereby they might encourage men the more securely to pursue their lewd courses; and wherein he describes the || 'great and terrible

(*d*) He is called *Cæsarianus*, as being the emperor's freed man, and by the apostle the lion, 2 Tim. iv. 17. by reason of his cruelty against Christians.

* That this epistle was written by St Peter, is evident both from the inscription it bears, and the concurrence of circumstances in it, relating to that apostle, and none else; and therefore we may suppose, that the true reason of its late reception into the list of the Hdly Scriptures, was, not so much its difference of style, as its not being addressed to any particular church, that might have taken care to preserve it, and in due time to have entered its claim for a place in the canon: And that it was indited, not after the destruction of Jerusalem, as some will have it, but a little before the author's death (not improbably in the 13th of Nero's reign, A. D. 67.), may be justly concluded from this declaration of his, "I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to put you always in remembrance of these things, knowing, that shortly I shall put off this tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewn me," 2 Pet. i. 12, 13, 14. *Beausobre's*, *Whitby's*, and *Hammond's* Preface to the 2d Epistle of St Peter; *Sherlock's* First Dissertation at the end of his Discourses on Prophecy, and *Marsh's* *Michaelis*, vol. iv.

† There are three sorts of people which the apostle cautions his converts against in this epistle. 1st, The Solifidians, who talked of attaining salvation by the strength of their faith, or a right belief of the doctrines of Christianity, without any regard to a virtuous life, 2dly, The Nicolaitans, who turned the "grace

of God into lasciviousness," and, upon the presumption of their being spiritual persons, and the seed of election, averred, that they contracted no guilt, and could receive no pollution from any evil action they did. And, 3dly, The scoffers at the promise of Christ's coming to judgment, which they looked upon as a thing that could never be verified, and which the continuance of their persecutions gave the Christians small hopes of expecting. *Whitby's* Preface to the Second Epistle of St Peter.

|| It is the opinion of the reverend and judicious Dr Hammond and Dr Lightfoot, that St Peter, in the third chapter of his second epistle, does not discourse of our Lord's coming to the general judgment of all mankind; but only of his coming to execute his judgment on the Jews in the final destruction of their church and nation: But, besides that this notion is entirely new, and contrary to the sentiments of all the ancients, who have commented upon this epistle, it seems obvious at first sight, that "the day of the Lord, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up," can mean no other than the great day of judgment: For, to interpret these words of the destruction of Jerusalem only, is to turn them into a metaphor and allegory; whereas St Peter says plainly, that as the old world was destroyed by water, so shall the world that now is be destroyed by fire, 2 Pet. iii. 6, 7. It is usual indeed with the prophets, to represent God's judgments on the enemies of his church

day of the Lord,' when the elements shall melt, and the whole frame of nature be dissolved, thereby to excite them to become circumspect and diligent, in order to be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." From Acts i.
10 to the end.

About the same time St Paul wrote his second epistle * to Timothy ; " wherein he informs him of the near approach of his death, and desires him to come to him before winter, because most of his companions, upon one affair or other, were departed from him ; wherein he exhorts him to discharge all the duties of a bishop and pastor, suitable to those excellent gifts he had received, and with a generous contempt of the world and worldly things ; wherein he admonishes him, not to forget the doctrine which he had taught him, nor to be surprised or disturbed at the apostacy of some from the faith, but to preach the more zealously against such opposers, as heaped up to themselves teachers, and left the truth to turn unto fables ; and wherein he acquainted him, how, at his first appearing before Heliuss, all his companions, for fear of being involved in his punishment, (a) forsook him, but that the Lord stood by him and strengthened him, to make his preaching more conspicuous and effectual to the Gentiles."

How long these two apostles lived under their confinement, we have no certain knowledge, but at last it being determined that they should both die, Peter, as a Jew and foreigner, was sentenced to be crucified, and Paul, *2 as a Roman citizen, to be behead-

and people, by the tragical expressions of " burning up the earth, and dissolving the heavens," Isa. xiii. 9, &c. xxxiv. 3, &c. ; but this solemn exhortation, " seeing then all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness ; looking for, and hastening to, the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that we may be found of him without spot, and blameless ? " 2 Pet. iii. 11, 12.—This exhortation, I say, sounds too high for the destruction of Jerusalem, in which they of Pontus and Galatia could not be much concerned ; but is very proper for those who had the lively ideas of the conflagration of the world, and the tremendous judgment and perdition of ungodly men, then set before them. *Whitby's* Preface to the Second Epistle of St Peter.

* That, at two different times, St Paul was a prisoner at Rome, is evident from the circumstances which himself relates. In his first confinement, he was permitted to live in his hired house, and to receive all that came to him, Acts xxviii. 30, 31. but in his second, he was so closely shut up, that Onesiphorus was forced to enquire diligently after him before he found him, 2 Tim. i. 17. In the first, Timothy and Mark were both with him, and constantly attending him, Phil. i. 1. and Col. iv. 10. In the second, they were both absent in Asia, and knew nothing of what passed in Rome, 2 Tim. iv. 11. In the first, Demas had adjoined himself to him, and was become a fellow labourer in the Gospel. In the second, out of love to the things of this world, he had forsaken him, and departed to Thessalonica, 2 Tim. iv. 10. In the first, " many of the brethren, waxing confident by his bonds, were much more bold to speak the word without fear," Phil. i. 14. But in the second, they were so intimidated, " that they all forsook him, and not one man stood with him," 2 Tim. iv. 16. And if it thus appears, that St Paul was twice in custody at Rome, himself gives us to understand, that this epistle was written under his latter confinement, and was

very probably the last that ever he wrote : For, " I am ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand ; I have finished my course, and from henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of glory," 2 Tim. iv. 6, &c. are the words of one that is approaching to his latter end. This therefore is a strong indication of the singular affection which St Paul had for Timothy, that he favoured him with one of the last letters that he ever wrote ; And if, pursuant to this letter, Timothy went to Rome, (as probably he did) he must have been there when the apostle was led out to suffer, and finished his course in a glorious martyrdom. After the death of St Paul, the history of Timothy is but short ; only we may suppose that he returned to Ephesus probably the year following, and there continued to govern that church in the capacity of their bishop, until the Pagans of that city, who were great votaries to the goddess Diana, celebrating a festival called Catagogian, in which they carried about the images of their gods, and by means of their masks and clubs committed a thousand insolences and outrages, Timothy stood in the streets to oppose, and reprove this execrable custom ; which so enraged the people, that, falling upon him with stones and clubs, they left him for dead : but some of his disciples finding him to breathe, took him up, and lodged him without the gates, where in two days he expired, and was afterwards buried on a mountain not far from the city. *Whitby's* and *Beausobre's* Preface to the Second Epistle of Timothy, and *Echard's* Ecclesiastical History.

(a) 2 Tim. iv. 17.

*2 This was accounted a more noble kind of death, not among the Romans only, but among other nations, as being fitter for persons of better quality, and more ingenuous education : and from this instrument of his execution the custom no doubt first arose, that in all pictures and images of this apostle, he is constantly represented with a sword in his right hand. He is said to have suffered in the sixty-eighth year of

A. M. 4072,
&c. or 5476.
Ann. Dom.
68, &c. or 65.

ed *. On the 29th of June, (as it is generally supposed) St Peter being first scourged, according to the Roman custom, was led to the top of the Vatican Mount, near Tiber, where he desired the favour of the officers, that he might be crucified with his head downwards, "as thinking himself unworthy to suffer in the same posture wherein his Lord and Master had suffered before him." In this manner † he expired upon the cross; while St Paul having converted three of the soldiers that were sent to guard him to his execution, and who, within a few days after died martyrs themselves, when he came to the place called Aquæ Salvæ, about three miles out of the city, after some solemn preparation, cheerfully gave up his neck to the fatal stroke.

Thus died *² the two most eminent apostles of Jesus Christ, after they had, with indefatigable labour, reaped a glorious harvest of infinite numbers of souls, and triumphantly propagated salvation to the most considerable parts of the world; and as they were equally concerned in the foundation of the church of Rome, the one having the Jewish, and the other the Gentile converts under his care and government, when both of them were dead, the whole administration of it devolved upon †² Linus, one of St

his age, to have been buried in the *Via Appia*, about two miles from Rome, and by Constantine the Great, to have had a stately church built over his grave. It was adorned with an hundred of the best marble columns, and beautified with the most exquisite workmanship; but as it was afterwards thought to be too narrow and little for the honour of so great an apostle, Valentinian, or rather Theodosius the emperor, (the one but finishing what the other begun) by a rescript directed to Salustius prefect of the city, caused it to be taken down, and a larger and more noble one to be built in its room. *Cave's Lives of the apostles.*

* Many of the ancients positively affirm, that both these apostles suffered on the same day and year; but others, though allowing the same day, tell us, that St Paul did not suffer till a year after St Peter, and some interpose the distance of several years. *Cave, ibid.*

† His body being taken from the cross, was embalmed after the Jewish manner by Marcellinus, the presbyter, and so buried in the Vatican, near the Triumphal Way. Over his grave a small church was soon after erected; but when it was destroyed by Heliogabalus, his body was removed to the cemetery in the Appian Way, two miles distant from Rome. Here it continued till, in the time of Pope Cornelius, it was reconveyed to the Vatican, where it abode in some obscurity until Constantine the Great, out of the profound reverence he had for the Christian religion, having rebuilt and enlarged the Vatican to the honour of St Peter, enriched it with gifts and ornaments, which in every age increased in splendor and beauty, till it is become one of the wonders of the world at this day. *Cave, ibid.*

*² Before we part with these two apostles, it may not be amiss to take a short survey of their persons and tempers. St Peter (if we may believe the description which Nicephorus gives us of him) was of a middle size, but somewhat slender, and inclining to tallness: His complexion was very pale; his hair thick and curled; his eyes black; his eye-brows thin; and his nose large, but not sharp. In his natural temper (as most Galileans were) he was warm, eager, and enterprising; stout and courageous in the main,

though, in some cases, his fear prevailed, and destroyed the succours which reason offered. His humility and lowliness of mind were singular; his affection and zeal for his Master wonderful; his love for the souls of men ardent; his diligence in his ministerial office indefatigable; and his rule and conduct in his episcopal capacity highly prudent and engaging. St Paul (if we may believe the same Nicephorus) was of a low and small stature, somewhat stooping; his complexion was fair; his countenance grave; his head small; his eyes sparkling; his nose high and bending; and his hair thick and dark, but mixed with grey. His constitution was weak, and often subject to distempers; but his mind was strong, and endued with a solid judgment, quick invention, and prompt memory, which were all improved by art, and the advantages of a liberal education: His humility and self-abasement were wonderful; his sobriety and temperance singularly strict; his contempt of the world great and generous; his charity to the poor extensive; his love for mens souls universal; his labours in the execution of his ministry incessant; his constancy in the profession of religion invincible; and his style and manner of writing, to inculcate it, even by the confession of his enemies, "weighty and powerful," 2 Cor. x. 10. Besides the epistles, which are owned to be genuine, several other writings are falsely ascribed to him, as an epistle to the Laodiceans, a third to the Thessalonians, a third to the Corinthians, a second to the Ephesians, his letter to Seneca, his Acts, his Revelation, his voyage to Thecla, and his Sermons: As the like has been done to St Peter, viz. his Acts, Gospel, Revelation, Preaching Judgment, and Liturgy. *Cave, ibid.*

†² The book of Apostolical Constitutions says, that Linus, the son of Herculaneus, a Tuscan by birth, was ordained bishop of Rome by St Paul, long before the death of St Peter; and Ruffinus asserts, that he and Anacletus, having governed that church while the apostles Peter and Paul were living, but then absent, Peter, a little before his death, chose at last Clement to succeed him in the See of Rome; but Clement (according to Epiphanius) out of modesty refused to exercise that office, till after the death of Linus and Anacletus. *Calmet's Dict. and Cave's Disputat. Apost.*

Paul's disciples, of whom he makes mention in his second epistle to Timothy (a), and who, after twelve years presiding therein, is said to have suffered martyrdom either in the first or second year of Titus. From Acts i. 10. to the end.

One of St Paul's predictions was, that in the Christian church (b) heresies should arise, for the manifestation of such as were sound in the faith; which prediction began now to be verified: For, besides the immediate followers of Simon Magus, * those of Menander, Ebion, and Cerinthus, as well as others, who are styled (c) *² Nicolaitans, appearing eager advocates for such principles as sapped the very foundations of the Christian religion, obliged † St Jude to write his epistle (in the same manner as St

(a) Chap. iv. 21.

(b) 1 Cor. xi. 19.

* Menander was a Samaritan, and, like Simon, a notorious impostor and magician; but abounding with more monstrous illusions than he. He gave it out, that he was a Saviour sent from above for the restoration of mankind, and that whoever was instructed in his occult knowledge, and initiated in his baptism, should enjoy a perpetual immortality, and continue always young and vigorous, even in this world. With these, and several other of his Master Simon's opinions, he seduced many in Antioch; and though the extravagancy of his notions made them less infectious, yet they were continued in the second century, particularly by Basilides and Saturninus. Ebion, so called for his affected poverty, was born at Cocaba, a village in Palestine, and spread his heresy in Trachonitis, and among the Christians, who, before the siege of Jerusalem, had retired to Pella. He denied the Divinity of our Saviour; and, though he acknowledged him for an excellent person, believed him to be no more than the son of Joseph and Mary. He enjoined the observation of the law of Moses as necessary to salvation; received all the writings of the Old Testament, but none of the New except St Matthew's Gospel; and particularly condemned St Paul as an apostate, for proving the dissolution of the Jewish law. Cerinthus spread his heresy in Ephesus and other parts of Asia Minor; and, in his denial of our Lord's divinity, his acknowledgment of St Matthew's Gospel, and asserting the obligation of the Mosaic law, agreed exactly with Ebion; as he did with the Gnostics, in asserting the creation of the world by angels. To insinuate himself with the vulgar, he boasted much of his illuminations and revelations, and, to make the mystery of our Lord's passion more familiar, distinguished between Jesus and Christ, and accordingly taught, that Jesus was but a mere man; that Christ descended upon him in the likeness of a dove, and continued with him during the time of his ministry; but that, as Christ was incapable of suffering, he forsook Jesus when he came to be crucified, and left him to die: But his kingdom afterwards he affirmed should be terrestrial, in the city of Jerusalem, where men should enjoy all kinds of carnal pleasures for a thousand years.

(c) Rev. ii. 15.

*² The Nicolaitans are supposed to derive their original from Nicolas, one of the deacons mentioned in the vi. of Acts; and (as Clemens Alexandrius relates the story) not improbably on this occasion, This Nicolas had a beautiful wife, of whom he was said to

be jealous; but, to shew the apostles how far he was from that, he brought her forth one day, and gave any person leave to marry her. Himself was a sober and temperate man, who never knew any woman but his own wife, by whom he had one son and several daughters, who lived all unmarried, and shewed that their father was no encourager of lewdness; but so it was, that, being accustomed to make use of an expression which bore an equivocal meaning, viz. "That we ought to abuse the flesh," meaning, that we ought to mortify and keep it under; by this saying of his, and what he had done in offering his wife, he unhappily gave an umbrage to his disciples and followers to throw off all restraint, and to give themselves over to the grossest impurities, allowing of the most pernicious mixtures, and making corporal pleasure the ultimate end of man. *Echard's* and *Lamy's* Ecclesiastical Histories.

† This Jude, who, in the History of the Gospel, is styled our Lord's brother, as being the son of Mary, sister to the Blessed Virgin, was undoubtedly the brother of James the Less, bishop of Jerusalem, Matth. xiii. 55. and "it may be (as Dr Lightfoot expresses himself) that St Jude stands up in the charge of his brother James among the circumcision of Judea, and directs his epistle to all such as were sanctified and preserved in those apostatizing times, as his brother had done to all the twelve tribes in general." Between this and St Peter's second epistle there is certainly a great resemblance. The end aimed at in both, viz. to expose in their true light the corrupt principles and practices of the Gnostics, is evidently the same; and the arguments and expressions in many cases so much alike, that it has been disputed whether St Jude has here abridged that of St Peter, or St Peter enlarged upon this of St Jude, though most are of the former opinion. And indeed, when we find St Jude quoting expressly this epistle of St Peter (Jude, ver. 17. compared with 2 Pet. iii. 1, 2.), alluding to St Paul's second epistle to Timothy (2 Tim. iii. 1. compared with Jude, ver. 18.), and speaking of the apostles as persons who had been some time dead, we cannot but conclude, that this epistle was not written till after the death of the apostles St Peter and St Paul, but how long after we cannot tell. [It has been objected to the authority of the epistle of St Jude, that the author quotes from two apocryphal books—the one in Greek, entitled *The Assumption of Moses*, which Origen saw and thought a true history, and the other a Jewish forgery, entitled *The Prophecies of Enoch*. But to this

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Peter did his) to the Jewish converts, in their several dispersions; "Wherein he informs them, that his primary intention was to have wrote to them in general of the common salvation, in order to confirm them in it; yet, seeing the doctrine of Christ attacked on every side by heretics, he thought it more necessary to exhort them to stand up manfully for the defence of the "faith once delivered to the saints," and to oppose those false teachers who so earnestly laboured to corrupt them; and that they might know these the better, he describes them in their proper colours, and foretels their future, if not impending destruction; but exhorts them, at the same time, to endeavour, by all gentle methods, to save them, and to take them out of the fire into which their own folly had cast them."

It is very observable of this apostle, that the evangelists commonly call him, not Jude, but either * Thaddæus or Lebbæus, out of a particular dislike, no doubt, to the name of Judas, ever since the treacherous and bloody Iscariot betrayed and sold his Master; but then the Sacred Records are so very short in their accounts of him, as well as of the other remaining apostles, that we must, in this case, be beholden to other ecclesiastical writers; who tell us of this St Jude, that, after our Lord's ascent into heaven, having for some time preached about Judea and Galilee, next in Samaria and Idumea, and then in Syria and Mesopotamia, he travelled at last into Persia, where, at the instigation of the magi, provoked by his open rebukes of their idolatrous worship of the sun, and other superstitions, he was assaulted by the common people, and, after other previous cruelties, crucified: Who tell us of † St Simon, that, upon the dispersion of the apostles, having preached in Egypt, Cyrene, Africa, Mauritania, and other remote countries thereunto adjoining, at length bent his course westward, and ‖ came into

it is sufficient to reply, that though St Jude might consider the whole story of the devil's contention with Michael about the body of Moses as a mere fable, he might yet quote it as an instructive fable, illustrative of the doctrine which it was his object to inculcate, namely, that we ought not to speak evil of dignities; just as other fables are quoted or invented to illustrate different doctrines both in the Old and in the New Testament. It is not indeed conceivable that any prophecies written by Enoch could be extant in the days of Jude; but the apostle does not say that there were, or that he quoted from any written book. He says only, that "Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied," &c.; and as this is certainly not improbable in itself, such prophecies, or what was supposed to be such prophecies, might have been preserved by tradition among the Jews of his time; and though not enrolled in the canon of Scripture, have, like other traditions obtained from that people, a very considerable degree of credit, which made a reference to them sufficient for his purpose.] *Whitby's* Preface to the Epistle of Jude, *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv. *Marsh's* Michaelis, vol. iv. and *Lardner's* Supplement, &c.

* The superstitious veneration which the Jews had for the sacred name of Jehovah, would not suffer them to pronounce it in common conversation; and hence it was, that when any man had a name, wherein occurred the major part of this ineffable title (as it did in Jehuda, or Juda), they chose rather to change it in common speech for another of the like importance, but different characters; for which reason Judas, which denotes Praise, was changed into Thaddæus, a word of the same signification. Concerning

the other name of Lebbæus, conjectures have been various. Some deriving it from an Hebrew word which signifies the heart, will have it to intimate the extraordinary wisdom and courage of this apostle; while others draw it from a root, which imports a lion, and think it an allusion to that prophecy of Jacob, which compares his son Judah to an old lion, and a lion's whelp, Gen. xlix. 9. though all this etymology might be spared, if we can but (with Dr Lightfoot) suppose, that this name was taken from Lebba, a town in Galilee, where he conceives that this apostle was born. *Cave's* Lives of the Apostles, and *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels.

† This apostle (to distinguish him, I suppose, from that other Simon surnamed Peter) is styled Simon Zelotes, or Simon the Canaanite; but the latter name, we must observe, does not relate to his country or kindred, but is indeed the same in sense with Zelotes, and derived from an Hebrew, as that is from a Greek word, signifying Zeal; but whether this title was given him, in regard of any personal warmth, or vigour remarkable in him, or whether to denote him one of that sect who were called Zealots among the Jews, we cannot tell; only we may observe, that if it was upon the latter account, his conversion was more signal, since nothing could be more opposite to the meekness and gentleness of Christianity, than the irregularity and fierceness of that spirit by which this sect was actuated. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels.

‖ Others say, that after his preaching the Gospel in Egypt, he came into Mesopotamia, and there meeting with St Jude, went with him into Persia, where they both received the crown of martyrdom;

Britain, where, after many miracles wrought, and great hardships undergone, he was at last put to death, for the testimony of the truth, by the then rude and barbarous inhabitants of that island: Who tell us of † St Thomas, that having preached in Media, Persia, Hyrcania, Bactriana, &c. he was at length encouraged by a Divine vision to travel into India, where, coming into the country of the Brachmans, by the miracles which he wrought, he converted so many (and among others Sagamo, the prince of the country), that the priests, fearing the downfall of their religion, fell upon him while he was intent at prayer, with stones and darts, and at last one of them coming nearer, ran him through with a lance: Who tell of * St Philip, that after his having made many converts in the Upper Asia, Colchis, and some parts of Scythia, he came at length to Hierapolis, a noted city in Phrygia, where the inhabitants at that time paid their adorations to a †² dragon, which when the apostle by his prayers and invocation of the name of Christ, either quite destroyed or caused to disappear, the magistrates of the place were so exasperated against him, that they threw him into prison, and, after a severe scourging, ordered him either to be hanged or crucified: Who tell us of †³ St Bartholomew (generally supposed to be the same with Nathaniel), that having with great success propagated Christianity in the Higher India (whither he carried St Matthew's gospel), he thence removed into Lycaonia, and came at last to Albinople, a city of the Greater Armenia, at this time miserably over-run with idolatry, where, having converted their king Polymius and his wife, and by their example prevailed with multitudes to relinquish their idols, he so far enraged the priests against him, that they

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10. to the end.

for which reason perhaps it is that the church commemorates them both together in one festival. *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels.

† It was customary with the Jews, when traveling into foreign countries, or familiarly conversing with the Greeks and Romans, to assume to themselves a Greek or Latin name of great affinity, and sometimes of the very same signification with that of their own country; as that of Thomas and Didymus, one in the Syriac, and the other in the Greek, do both signify a twin. He no doubt was a Jew, and in all probability a Galilean, as well as the other apostles; but the place of his birth, and the nature of his calling (unless we should suppose that he was brought up to the trade of fishing), is a thing unknown. It is generally agreed, however, that he preached the Gospel in the East Indies, by reason of the great numbers of Christians found there in several places, who still go by the name of St Thomas, though there are not wanting some who ascribe the original of this sect to a person of the same name, who lived many centuries after. *Cave's Lives of the Apostles*, *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, and *Buchanan's Christian Researches*.

* This apostle was born at Bethsaida, a town near the sea of Tiberias; but of his parents and manner of life, the history of the Gospel takes no notice, though probably he was a fisherman, the general trade of the place. He is said to have preached in the Upper Asia; to have wrought many miracles in Hierapolis, a city of Phrygia, (now called by the Turks, Pambuck-Kulasi, from the rocks about it, which are white like cotton) and there to have suffered martyrdom, by being fastened to a cross and stoned to death. *Cave's Lives of the Apostles*, and *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.

†² This doubtless was done in memory of that infamous act of Jupiter, who, in the shape of a dragon, insinuated himself into the embraces of Proserpine, his own daughter, begot of Ceres, and whom the Phrygians chiefly worshipped, as Clemens of Alexandria informs us. *Cave*, *ibid*.

†³ That Nathaniel and Bartholomew were only two names for one and the same person, the one his proper, and the other his relative name, appears from several passages in the Gospels compared together; but then the question is, upon what account it was that he had his relative name conferred on him? That several sects in the Jewish church denominated themselves from some famous person of that nation (as the Essenes did from Enosh, and the Sadducees from Sadoc) cannot be denied; and therefore, if we may suppose that there were others who called themselves Tholmæans, from Tholmai, scholar to Heber, the ancient master of the Hebrews, who flourished in Debir and Hebron, it will be no hard matter to make Nathaniel of this order and institution, and thereupon to give him the name of Bartholomew, i. e. a scholar of the Tholmæans, and so create him (as he is said to have been) a doctor of the Jewish law. But an easier account of this matter is,—That as the first syllable of this name signifies a son, the word Bartholomew will import no more than the son of Tholomeu or Tholmai, which was no uncommon name among the Jews. And that it was an usual thing among them for the son thus to derive his name, is evident from the instance of Bar-timæus, which is interpreted the “son of Timæus,” Mark x. 46. and that of Bar-jona, Matth. xvi. 17. which St John makes the same with Simon, son of Jonas, John xxi. 15. *Cave's Lives of the Apostles*, and *Stanhope* on the Epistles and Gospels.

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instigated Astyages, the king's brother, to get him into his hands, and to have him * first flayed, and then either beheaded or crucified: Who tell us of † St Matthias, that having for some time employed himself in the work of the ministry within the confines of Judea, at length he betook himself to other countries, and travelling eastward, came at last to Ethiopia, (or Cappadocia rather) where, meeting with a people of a fierce and untractable temper. after all his labours and sufferings, and a numerous conversion to the Christian faith, from them he received the crown of martyrdom, but in what manner it was conferred † authors are not agreed: And who tell us of St Barnabas *², that after his separation from St Paul, having preached about Liguria, and settled a church at Milan, (whereof himself was constituted bishop) he returned at last to Cyprus, his native country, where, by the malice of the Jews, he was tumultuously assaulted, and stoned to death at Salamis, the principal city of the island.

Thus were all the apostles and first ministers of Christ appointed by God to lay down their lives in testimony of the truth of the Gospel, except the beloved evangelist †² St John; and yet, if we consider his stripes and imprisonment by the council of Jerusalem, his || banishment to the isle of Patmos for the word of God, and his being

* That excoriation was a punishment in use not only in Egypt, but among the Persians likewise, is evident from the testimony of Plutarch, who records a particular instance of Mesabates the Persian eunuch's being first flayed alive and then crucified. In vita Artaxerx. And that the Armenians, who were next neighbours to the Persians, might from them borrow this piece of barbarous and inhuman cruelty, is no hard supposition at all; [for, according to Bruce, it is a punishment sometimes inflicted in Abyssinia at this day.] *Cave's Lives of the Apostles, and Bruce's Travels.*

‡ As this apostle was not one of the first election, immediately called and chosen by our Saviour, we are not to expect any account of him in the history of the Gospel; but from the Acts of the Apostles, we learn, that being one of our Lord's disciples, and probably one of the seventy, upon the death of Judas he was elected into the apostleship, which he discharged with great efficacy, and a full demonstration of the Spirit and of power: But there are some things in ecclesiastical story related of him, (as particularly when he preached the Gospel in Macedonia, and the heathens, to make experiment of his faith, gave him a poisonous potion, that he cheerfully drank it up in the name of Christ, and received no harm) which have not met with so ready a credence, though the instance before us be no more than the completion of our Saviour's promise to his apostles, "they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them," Mark xvi. 18. *Cave's Lives of the Apostles.*

† Ancient martyrology reports him to have been seized by the Jews, and, as a blasphemer, to have been first stoned and then beheaded; but the Greek offices, seconded herein by several ancient breviaries, tell us, that he was crucified, as an hymn, cited by Dr Cave out of the Greek offices, seems to import. There was a spurious book, called the Gospel, or Acts of Matthias, which Eusebius tells us was composed by heretics, and fathered upon him; even as Clemens of Alexandria observes, that Valentinus, Marcion, and Basilides, sheltered their vile tenets under the

pretended authority of this apostle. *Cave's Lives of the Apostles, and Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels, vol. iv.*

*² In relation to this apostle, we have only to remark, that he hath left us one epistle, reckoned among the Apocryphal writings of the first Christians, which may be genuine perhaps, though not canonical. Its principal design is to prove that the law is abolished by the Gospel; that legal ceremonies are useless; and that the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ was necessary. It is certainly very ancient, full of piety and zeal, frequently quoted by Clemens of Alexandria, and though written in a style very allegorical, by the labours of our late Archbishop Wake is made, to the English reader, both entertaining and profitable. *Calmet's Dictionary, and Stanhope on the Epistles and Gospels.*

†² Theophylact, and others before him, were of opinion, that our apostle died a martyr, upon no other ground than what our Saviour told him and his brother, that they should drink of the cup, and be baptized with the baptism wherewith he was baptized, which St Chrysostom strictly understands of a bloody death. This was indeed literally verified of his brother James; but the general sense of antiquity is, that St John died in his bed. *Cave's Lives of the Apostles.*

|| This punishment, in the Roman law, is called *capitis diminutio*, because the person thus banished was disfranchised, and the city thereby lost an head. It succeeded in the room of that ancient punishment, *aquâ et igni interdicere*, whereby it was implied, that the man must, for his own defence, betake himself into banishment, when it became unlawful for any to accommodate him with lodging or diet, or any other necessary of life. But this banishing into islands was properly called *disportatio*, being accounted the worst kind of exile, whereby the criminal forfeited his estate, and being bound and put on ship-board, was, by public officers, transported to some certain island, (which none but the emperor himself might assign) there to be confined to perpetual banishment. The place to which St John was carried

cast into a cauldron of flaming oil † by the order of Domitian, we can hardly deny him the honour of being a martyr, since he submitted himself freely to such sufferings as nothing but a miracle could rescue him from. From Acts. i.
10. to the end.

Of this apostle the same ecclesiastical writers tell us, That (a) after the death of the blessed mother, (which happened about fifteen years after our Lord's ascension) by the special conduct of the Holy Ghost, he was carried into Asia, on purpose to oppose the heresies which in those parts began to spread and infest the church; that as he spared no pains in preaching the Gospel where it was wanted, and in confirming it where it had been settled, many churches of note and eminence, besides those mentioned in the beginning of his revelation, were of his foundation; that in the persecution raised by Domitian, the proconsul of Asia sent him bound to Rome, as an asserter of atheism, and a subverter of the religion of the empire, where he was treated with the utmost barbarity, and at length banished into a desolate island, there to be employed in digging in the mines; that in this disconsolate place, however, he was entertained with the more immediate converse of heaven, and by frequent visions and prophetic representations, had a clear prospect given him of the state of Christianity in the future periods and ages of the church *, which he has transmitted to us; that upon the death of Domitian, when Nerva had rescinded all his odious edicts, our apostle took the opportunity to return to Ephesus, and (as Timothy had lately

was Patmos, a little island in the Archipelago, now called Palmosa, mountainous, but moderately fruitful, especially in wheat and pulse, though defective in other commodities. The whole circumference of the island is about thirty miles, and on one of the mountains stands a town of the same name, having on the top of it a monastery of Greek monks; and on the north side of the town the inhabitants by tradition shew an house, in which the Apocalypse was written, and not far off the cave where it was revealed, both places of great esteem and veneration with the Greeks and Latins. *Cave's Lives of the Apostles*, and *Wells's Geography of the New Testament*.

† This is a point of history that has of late been called in question: But since it is attested by Tertullian de Præscript. c. 36. a most learned and very honest man, and who lived near enough the time to be certified of the truth: since it is contradicted by no ecclesiastical writer that we know of, is no more incredible than St Paul's taking up a viper unhurt, Acts xxviii. 3, &c. and is agreeable to the intimation given of St John, that he should not die a martyr, John xxi. 21, 22. there can be no reason for cavilling at this in those that admit of the possibility of any miracle. *Collins's Grounds*, &c. and *Whiston's Answer*.

(a) *Cave's Life of St John*, and *Echard's Ecclesiastical History*, vol. ii.

* The Apocalypse, or book of Revelation, as we call it, was of old not only condemned by heretics, but controverted by many of the fathers likewise. Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, tells us, that for his part he durst not reject it, being persuaded, that it contained many wise and admirable mysteries, though he could not comprehend them; and that though he owned the author to have been a Divinely inspired person, yet he could not believe it to be St John, the

apostle and evangelist, because the style, matter, and method of it, did no ways agree with his other writings. The common current of antiquity, however, runs another way; and as the diversity of style, &c. is of no moment in this case, because that in subjects which are so vastly different, it is hardly possible for any man to observe the same tenor and way of writing, the book being wrote in the island Patmos, which is a circumstance compatible to none but St John; his name so frequently occurring in it, his styling himself "a brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ;" his writing particular epistles to the seven churches in Asia, all planted, or at least cultivated by him, together with doctrines contained in them, all suitable to the apostolic spirit and temper, these are so many concurring evidences to prove our apostle to have been the author of it, whatever was the occasion of its not being received so readily into the canon of Scripture. [The reason why it is not mentioned in the most ancient catalogues of the sacred books seems to be this. It contains many things far above the comprehension of the unlearned, and not a few about the true sense of which, the most eminent divines, and skilful critics, are not even yet agreed. On this account it was not publicly read in the churches, or at most very sparingly, as is the case at this day in the church of England. Origen divides the New Testament into three parts; 1. The Gospels; 2. The Epistles of the Apostles; and, 3. The Apocalypse; from which it seems probable that the Apocalypse was then kept in a distinct volume, as being proper to be read by none but men of great eminence in the church; but the books recorded in the most ancient catalogues, were such as every man was to have in his possession, and constantly to read.] *Cave's Life of St John*, and *Johnson's Edition of the Apostolical Canons*.

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been dead) at the request of the bishops of the province, entered upon the administration of that Metropolitan See, and therein continued till the reign of Trajan; that in the time of his ruling this church, he wrote three several epistles; wherof the first is called Catholic, calculated, as it were, for all times and places, "in which he excites his little children (as he calls all Christians) to love and charity, to holiness and purity of manners; cautions them against resting in a naked and empty profession of religion, against being led away by the crafty insinuations of seducers; antidotes them against the poison of the Gnostic principles and practices; and gives them most excellent rules for the conduct of the Christian life."

[The apostle's principal object appears to have been to confute the errors, not of Jews and heathens, but of Christian heretics; for he says expressly, that the persons whom he opposed, had but lately appeared in the world, and had gone out from the true church of Christ. These persons were Cerinthus and the Docetæ, of whom the former taught that Jesus was a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary, on whom the Æon, or super-angelic Being, Christ, descended at his baptism, but left him before his death; whilst the latter, on the other hand, maintained that Jesus was an incorporeal phantom, in which the Æon Christ, or the Divine nature, presented itself to mankind. Cerinthus, and indeed the whole sect of Gnostics in general, asserted likewise, that the apostles did not deliver the doctrine of Jesus as they received it, especially in the commandments, which were termed legal, whereas they themselves (the Gnostics) retained the genuine and uncorrupted mystery. All these errors are opposed by the very first words of the apostle's epistle. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon—*ἰδεταμεθα*—contemplated, looked upon often and intently, and our hands have handled of the word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." Here St John, in opposition both to Cerinthus and the Docetæ, asserts, that he declared that which was from the beginning, which he himself had seen and heard; that he taught the doctrine of Christ as it was originally delivered, and as he had heard it from Christ's own mouth, whose person could be no incorporeal phantom, since he had both seen and felt it; and that he made no addition of his own, but only reported as a faithful witness. As the Gnostics taught likewise that faith in Christ set men free from the laws of morality, and that a man, though he sinned, might still be righteous in respect to his spiritual soul, because sin proceeded only from the material body, St John said to those, for whose instruction he wrote, "Let no man deceive you, he that doth righteousness, is righteous." This, considered by itself, appears to be an identical proposition, hardly worthy of an apostle; and the same thing may be said of that other assertion—"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law;" but both these propositions, when considered as opposed to the doctrine of the Gnostics, are far from being superfluous, because evident as the truths which they express appear to be, these truths were virtually denied by those heretics, as they are by the Antinomians of the present day (a).]

The other two epistles are but short, and directed to particular persons; the one to a lady of honourable quality, "encouraging her and her children to charity, to perseverance in good works, and to shew no countenance to false teachers and deceivers; the other to the charitable and hospitable Gaius, so kind a friend, so courteous an entertainer of all indigent Christians.

The same authors tell us, that in his Archi-episcopal capacity, he took great care of the flock of Christ, and, notwithstanding his advanced age, went many journeys into the neighbouring provinces, to ordain bishops, to settle and confirm churches; and was

(a) See *Marsh's Michaelis*, vol. iv. ch. 30.

induced at last, by the request and importunity of several of his disciples, (even when he was 97 years of age) to compose his Gospel, † for a defence against the heresies then brooding, and for a supply of what the other evangelists had omitted : For as we cannot but suppose, that, in the course of the many years which he lived, he had seen the writings of all the rest of the apostles and evangelists, and signified his approbation of them : so we can hardly imagine any thing more worthy his care, or more necessary in itself, than for him to ascertain the authority of those writings, and to finish and settle the canon of Scripture, that it might be the rule of faith and practice, and the church's preservative against †² such heresies, as were very numerous even in those days, and very likely to give much trouble and scandal in future ages. This was the last service he had to do for the church of Christ, which, when he had accomplished, he then finished his course, and in a * good old age †³ dying peaceably at Ephesus,

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

† The ancients assign two reasons, especially for the writing of this Gospel. The first is, that he might obviate the early heresies of those times, especially of Ebion and Cerinthus, and the rest of that party who began openly to deny Christ's Divinity, and that he had any existence before his incarnation. The other is, that he might supply those passages of the evangelical history, which the rest of the sacred writers had omitted; and therefore, collecting the other three evangelists, he first set to them his seal, ratifying the truth of them with his approbation, and then added his own Gospel to the rest; wherein he chiefly insists upon the acts of Christ, from the first commencement of his ministry to the death of John the Baptist, in which the others were most defective; and wherein he largely records his discourses, because some of them were passed by, but takes not so much notice of his miracles, because they were sufficiently related by the rest. *Cave, ibid.*

†² The heresies that then were springing up, and not long after overspread the church in diverse places, were those of Menander, Cerinthus, and Ebion; whereof we shall give our reader this short account.

Menander was a Samaritan, a great disciple of Simon Magus, (of whose tenets and doctrines we have spoken before, (p. 459 of this volume) and a notorious impostor and magician, as well as he. He maintained, that the world was made by angels, denied the reality of Christ's manhood, and affirmed, that himself was the true Saviour of the world, sent from above for the restoration of mankind; that without being initiated into his magical knowledge, and baptized in his name, none could be saved: that his baptism was the true resurrection, which, to those that were partakers of it, would not fail to convey, even in this life, youth, vigour, and perpetual immortality. These were some of the illusions wherewith he seduced many in Antioch, the place where he chiefly resided, and though their extravagance made them less infectious, yet they were continued in the second century by Basilides and Saturninus.

Cerinthus was a Jew by birth, and spread his notions principally in Ephesus, and other parts of Asia Minor. He maintained, that the world was not made by God, but by a certain power distinct, and very different from the Supreme Being: That the old law and precepts of Moses were to be observed in con-

junction with those of Jesus Christ: That Jesus was no more than a mere man, born of Joseph and Mary, but that at his baptism Christ descended upon him like a dove; that at his crucifixion, Christ forsook him, and returning into heaven, left him to suffer alone; and lastly, that after the general resurrection, Christ's kingdom should be terrestrial in the city of Jerusalem, where men should enjoy all sorts of carnal pleasures, and pass their time in the celebration of marriage-feasts, and banquets for a thousand years.

Ebion, so called from his affected poverty, was born in a village of Palestine, and spread his heresy in Trachonitis. He agreed with Cerinthus in denying the divinity of our Saviour, and enjoining the observation of the law of Moses as necessary to salvation. He asserted, that God had given the dominion of all things to Christ and the devil; and that as the latter had the ascendancy in this world, so the former should have a much greater superiority in the next. All the prophets, after the time of Joshua, and all the New Testament, except the Gospel of St Matthew, he rejected; and, as for the writings of St Paul, these he utterly condemned, as the product of a wicked and vile apostate, because he endeavoured to prove the dissolution of the Mosaic law. *Fleury and Echard's Ecclesiastical Histories, and Tillemont's Hist. des Empereurs.*

* The general opinion is, that he was ninety-eight or ninety-nine years of age when he died, which was in the third year of Trajan's reign; St Chrysostom, however, is very positive, that he was an hundred years old when he wrote his Gospel; and Dorotheus affirms, that in the whole he lived an hundred and twenty. But all this is highly improbable: for, according to this account, he must be fifty years of age when he first became acquainted with our Lord; a thing directly contrary to the testimony of all antiquity, which makes him very young at the time of his being called to the apostolic office. *Cave, ibid.*

†³ But, contrary to this, some have peremptorily denied that he ever died at all, upon no better foundation than our Saviour's words to St Peter concerning him, "If I will, that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" though St John, who records these words, inserts a caution, that "Jesus did not say he should not die, but only, what if I will, that he tarry till I come?" John xxi, 22, 23. which doubtless he

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was buried || in that city, where several of the fathers observe, that his tomb, in their time, was remaining in a church which was built to his honour, and called by his name. Thus we are come to the conclusion of the apostolic age, and so have brought our history to its intended period.

ΜΟΝΩ ΤΩ ΘΕΩ ΔΟΞΑ.

THE OBJECTION.

“BUT pity it is that an history of so much consequence to the Christian world should be so soon brought to its period; or that the book of the Acts of the Apostles, which should contain, one would think, the most remarkable achievements of these great heroes, should so sadly belie its title: For, excepting St Peter and St Paul, all that we have of the rest is but here and there a particular passage of their lives; (a) now and then an oblique and accidental remark; and in some of them no more than a bare recital of their names. Nay, even as to the characters that are chiefly insisted on, the history of St Paul proceeds no farther than to his first imprisonment at Rome; and no sooner is St Peter delivered from his at Jerusalem, than the author entirely drops him, and has left it as a point undetermined, and a perpetual bone of contention between us and those of another communion, whether he was ever at Rome or no.

An author who affected to be thus brief, even in matters that required an illustration, should not fail, one would think, to be very clear and correct in the other part of his composition; and yet, what shall we say, (b) when we find him leading St Stephen (c), from the first call of Abraham to the generation then in being, through a wild goose chase of history, nothing at all to the purpose, and yet stuffed throughout with errors and falsehoods; for such, no doubt, is that (d) of Terah's death, before Abraham's re-

meant of his coming in judgment upon the Jews, at the final overthrow of Jerusalem, which was an event that St John outlived many years. However, as the apostles at first mistook our Saviour's meaning, and thereupon a report went out among the brethren, that his beloved disciple should not die; so we may observe, that the continuance of the same report, viz. that St John is still alive, has been made use of by some to wild and fantastic purposes. For Sulpitius Severus, speaking of a young Spaniard, who first professed himself to be Elias, and then Christ himself, adds, that at the same time there was one in the East, who pretended to be St John, even as Beza tells us of an impostor in his time who publicly did the same, and was afterwards burnt at Thoulouse in France. *Cave, ibid.*

|| But instead of being buried, we find Nicephorus, Hist. Eccl. l. 2. c. 42. relating the matter thus:—That St John, foreseeing his translation into heaven, took the clergy of the church of Ephesus, and several, other Christians, out of the city with him, to a cemetery, where himself was wont to retire to prayer; that, having there ordered a grave to be dug, after

he had instructed them in the precepts and mysteries of Theology, confirmed them in the practice of religion, and commended them to the care and blessing of Jesus Christ, he solemnly took his leave, and went down into the grave; that he strictly charged them to put on the grave-stone, and to make it fast, which accordingly they did; but coming next day, as he had enjoined them, when they opened the sepulchre they found nothing there but the grave-clothes, which he had left behind him. But this is far from agreeing with what another author, much of the same stamp, (the Arabic writer of his life) reports, viz. that there was none present at this apostle's burial but his disciple Phogsir, (he means very probably Prochorus, one of the seven deacons that constantly attended him) whom he required strictly never to discover his sepulchre to any: for the same reason, very likely, that the body of Moses is thought to have been concealed to prevent the idolatrous worshipping of his reliques. *Cave, ibid.*

(a) *Cave's Life of St Andrew.*

(b) *Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah*, part ii. p. 87.

(c) Acts vii.

(d) *Ibid.* ver. 4.

moval into Canaan, whereas he survived it sixty years; that of (a) the threescore and fifteen souls which went down with Jacob into Egypt, whereas, at the most, they were but seventy; and that of Jacob's being buried at Sychem, as (b) Stephen insinuates, whereas it is evident that he was buried (c) in the cave of Machpelah? What shall we say to his making Gamaliel, a learned doctor of the law, so far mistaken in his chronology, as to reckon Theudas and Judas of Galilee (d) both prior to the times he was then speaking of, whereas it is manifest (e) from Josephus, that this Theudas appeared and perished in the reign of Claudius, ten years at least after the council which was now met at Jerusalem? Or, what shall we say to the incredible number of (f) 'devout men, out of every nation under heaven' (as he calls it), which, on the day of Pentecost, were together at Jerusalem?

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

But the misfortune is still the greater, when, out of an affectation of brevity, an historian becomes so obscure, as to lay the foundation of perpetual contests in the Christian church; and yet it is certain, that the author of the Acts has incurred this fault to an high degree, by leaving the several orders of Christ's ministers so mixed and confounded together, that it is no easy matter to distinguish them, and next to impossible to define the separate powers which belong to each; that we are still wrangling and disputing concerning the difference between a bishop and an elder, and perhaps shall never come to the true knowledge of what the office of a deacon does import, or what share of authority the persons called (g) brethren originally had in the government of the church.

Timothy and Titus are said to be bishops of Ephesus and Crete; and yet we find them so frequently absent from their charge in their attendance upon St Paul, and going upon his errands at every turn, that either we must suppose the episcopal office was a different administration in those days, or that the privilege of non-residence was indulged them from the very first. Paul and Barnabas were certainly great preachers among the Gentiles, and yet the historian has given us no account of the time when they commenced apostles, though he has not failed to acquaint us with the particular occasion of their falling out, and upon what a trifling affair they chose to violate the bands of friendship, and interrupt the course of the Gospel, rather than recede from a pettish humour.

St Luke, indeed, if he was the compiler of the Acts of the Apostles, seems to be no great friend to either of the two persons who bear the principal characters in his history. For, what a reproach does he cast upon the memory of St Peter, when he introduces him (h) destroying, first the husband and then the wife, for no other reason but merely because they would not give away in charity every penny they had; whereas, in cases of this nature, every one should be left to his liberty to do what (i) 'he is disposed in his heart?' What an inconsistency does he discover in the behaviour of St Paul, that he should order Timothy (k) to be circumcised, when at the same time he enjoined, that (l) 'if any man was called in uncircumcision, he ought not to be circumcised;' for that if he was, (m) 'Christ would profit him nothing,' and upon that account (n) would not permit Titus, who was equally a Gentile, to submit to that ordinance?

It was policy enough in St Paul, when he found himself in danger of his life, (o) to declare himself a Pharisee (though this was implicitly renouncing his Christianity), thereby to divide the assembly, and gain over a party to his interest: But when he was in no such peril, it was a gross prevarication in him (p) to join in the observation of such ceremonies at Jerusalem, as he had been all along preaching against, and knew (q)

(a) Acts vii. ver. 14.
(e) *Antiquities*, lib. xx. c. 2.
(i) 2 Cor. ix. 7.
(n) Ibid. ii. 3.
Colos. ii. 14. Rom. vii. 4.

(b) Ibid. ver. 16.
(f) Acts ii. 5.
(k) Acts xvi. 3.
(o) Acts xxiii. 6.

(c) Gen. xlix. 30.
(g) Acts xv. 23.
(l) 1 Cor. vii. 18.
(p) Acts xxi. 26.

(d) Acts v. 36, 37.
(h) Ibid. v. 5. 10.
(m) Gal. v. 2.
(q) Eph. ii. 13.

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were abolished by the Christian institution; and no small rudeness to (a) withstand St Peter to the face after that, for a fault of the like nature at Antioch; as it was little less than hypocrisy in St James, and all the elders at Jerusalem, to put him upon an expedient, abhorrent to his own judgment, merely to gull the people into a false persuasion, that he complied with the Mosaic rites, and was indeed a (b) strict observer of the law.

But how much soever they might contrive to delude the people into this persuasion, we can hardly think that he himself had any great regard so much as to the moral part of the law, when, in opposition to the sound doctrine of St James, viz. that (c) 'by works a man is justified,' we find him setting up a quite different principle, and boldly asserting, that (d) 'by faith a man is justified without the deeds of the law,' (e) to the no small triumph of infidelity, when it sees two such pillars of the church contradicting one another so palpably. But well might St Paul contradict a private apostle, when in the case of 'eating those things which were offered in the sacrifice to idols,' he sets up his own opinion in opposition to the plain determination of the council of Jerusalem; and, notwithstanding their decree for abstaining from such polluted meats, ventures to say, that 'an idol is nothing in the world,' and therefore, (f) 'whether we eat, or eat not,' the things that are offered to it, 'we are neither better nor worse.'

It is natural to think, that a person who had so high a conceit of his own understanding and abilities, whenever he came into power, would not fail to exercise it in a manner arbitrary enough; and therefore we need less wonder that we find St Paul talking so much of (g) his rod of discipline; (h) reviling the high priest, though afterwards he sneakingly retracted it; (i) loading the poor copper-smith with an heavy imprecation; (k) delivering Hymeneus and others unto Satan; and exhorting those that were growing up in the church to the like violence of spirit, (l) 'to rebuke sharply, and with all authority, and not to let any man despise them.'

'(m) When the believers sold all that they had, and laid the price at the apostles feet,' we cannot but think, that the ecclesiastics in those days made free with some part of it, as having a right to (n) exchange their spiritual for the others carnal things; and therefore it is no easy matter to assign a reason for St Paul's leaving his cloak at Troas, since all the drollery of his pawning it for want of money to pay his reckoning, upon this supposition, vanishes. It seems more likely indeed, that the apostle, in this and some other passages, was minded to leave some obscurities in his writings, on purpose to raise a dust among commentators; and therefore we may as well pretend to resolve what St Jude means (o) by 'Michael's contending with the devil about the body of Moses,' as to define what St Paul alludes to by his (p) 'fighting with beasts at Ephesus;' by his (q) 'thorn in the flesh,' and 'messenger of Satan to buffet him;' and, above all, by his (r) 'man of sin, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God.' So true is the character which St Peter gives of his epistles, viz. that (s) 'in them are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable,' may easily 'wrest unto their own destruction'."

ANSWER. THAT the history of the Acts of the Apostles was written by St Luke, who was the author of the Gospel that goes under his name, the connection of the matter, the congruity of the style, the identity of the person to whom they are both addressed, and

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| (a) Gal. ii. 11. | (b) Acts xxi. 24. | (c) James ii. 24. | (d) Rom. iii. 28. |
| (e) <i>Kidder's</i> Demonstration of the Messiah, part ii. p. 92. | | | (f) 1 Cor. viii. 4. 8. |
| (g) <i>Ibid.</i> iv. 21. | (h) Acts xxiii. 3. 5. | (i) 2 Tim. iv. 14. | (k) 1 Tim. i. 20. |
| (l) Tit. i. 13. and ii. 15. | (m) Acts iv. 34, 35. | | (n) 1 Cor. ix. 11. |
| (o) Jude, ver. 9. | (p) 1 Cor. xv. 32. | (q) 2 Cor. xii. 7. | (r) 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4. |
| (s) 2 Pet. iii. 16. | | | |

the unanimous consent of all antiquity *, are a sufficient indication : (a) That this is an history of thirty years transactions ; whereof the former part principally contains the acts of the two apostles of the circumcision, Peter and John, with their preaching of the Gospel to the Jews ; and the latter, those of the two apostles of the uncircumcision, Paul and Barnabas, with the plantation and progress of the Gospel among the Gentiles, no one can doubt, that casts but an eye into its contents ; and that this history obtained the name of the Acts of the Apostles, it is generally thought, (b) not only because the doctrines which it contains, and the miracles which it relates, are the same throughout with what they all wrought and taught in common, but because sundry transactions that are recorded in the beginning of it, such as the resurrection and ascension of Christ, the election of Matthias, the descent of the Holy Ghost, and the miraculous infusion of languages, which enabled them to spread the Gospel through the universe, were things wherein they were all equally concerned. But then, why the actions of all those who were equally concerned in the propagation of the Gospel, were not equally consigned to writing by the penman of the sacred story, this, we must say, entirely depended on the Divine pleasure and determination.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

(c) " It shall come to pass in the last days " (says the prophet Isaiah, speaking of the times of the Gospel), " that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it ; and many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths ; for out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem : " So that, in conformity to this prediction, the Divine Providence thought fit that no more account should be given of the first plantation of Christianity in the world than what concerned Judea and the neighbouring countries, or, at farthest, the most eminent places of the Roman empire. We perhaps may think that a more particular relation of all that the apostles did in the several countries where they travelled, had been more satisfactory to an inquisitive mind ; but then we should remember, (d) that this would have swelled the holy volumes into too great a bulk, and so have rendered them less serviceable and accommodated to the ordinary use of Christians. All that was proper to be done upon this occasion therefore was, to single out some few persons who made the most eminent figure in the infancy of the church, and to represent their particular labours and sufferings in the propagation of Christianity as a specimen of all the rest.

That St Peter and St Paul were characters of this kind none can deny ; and therefore St Luke is not to be blamed in making choice of them. That he pursued the history of St Peter no farther, must be imputed to his adjoining himself to St Paul, whose constant attendant he then became, an eye-witness of the whole carriage of his life, and privy to his most intimate transactions ; and therefore we find him more copious upon this subject than any other : But why he did not finish his whole life, an ancient Arabic writer, cited by (e) Kirstenius, has given us this reason,—That after St Paul's imprisonment and departure from Rome, St Luke, who was left behind as his deputy, to supply his place, was, in a short time, put to death ; otherwise (says our author) he would have doubtless continued the history of the apostles acts.

* Thus we find it cited by St Clemens, St Paul's companion, epist. ad Corinth. ; by Papias, who conversed with men of the apostles times, apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 39. ; and by Polycarp, who was St John's disciple, Epist. ad Philip. Ch. iii. ; Irenæus, who flourished in the second century, in a large chapter of his, has almost epitomized it ; nor did we ever read of

any Jew or Gentile who excepted against its truth and authority. *W. 169's* Preface to the Acts.

(a) *Echard's Ecclesiastical History*, p. 340.

(b) *Beausob.'s* Preface sur les Actes de Apotres.

(c) Isaiah ii. 2, 3.

(d) *Cave's Life of St Andrew*.

(e) *Vit. qual. Evang.* p. 15.

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Without laying any stress then upon the testimony of the * Apocryphal acts of the apostles, which, it must be owned, are generally full of fable and romance, we may venture to affirm, that this one composition of St Luke is sufficient to answer all the purposes for which we can desire such a history. For what is it that we may reasonably expect in a work of this kind, but that it should, by a plain relation of facts, confirm our faith in the Gospel; show the accomplishment of the promises and predictions which Christ, the founder of our religion, has made to his disciples; and give us some competent knowledge of the settlement of that religion; by what methods it grew, and spread to places remote from its first plantation; what was the fate and behaviour of some of its first professors; and what the tenor of their doctrines and discourses: But that St Luke's history in all these particulars, has sufficiently acquitted itself, none that has read it with the least observation can deny.

St Peter, no doubt, was an eminent apostle, and accordingly makes a distinguished figure in the sacred story; but his being at Rome, is a point that we cannot expect from St Luke, because his account of things expires some time before our apostle came thither. Some writers indeed of the Roman communion place his first coming to Rome in the year of our Lord 44, which was the second of Claudius; but if we consider, that in the epistle which St Paul, towards the latter end of the reign of Claudius, wrote to the Romans, (wherein he spends the greatest part of one chapter in saluting the particular persons that were then at Rome) he never once makes mention of St Peter; and how, in that epistle, he expresses his earnest desire of coming thither, that "he might (a) impart unto them some spiritual gifts, to the end that they might be established in the faith," for which there could be no apparent reason, had St Peter been there so long before him: If we consider, that when St Paul, not many years after, i. e. about the second of Nero, was sent prisoner to Rome, among all the brethren (b) that came to meet him, as far as Appii-forum and the Three Taverns, we hear not a word of St Peter; and yet we cannot but think that, had he been then at Rome, he would have come at the head of the company to receive a brother apostle in chains, and that with him St Paul would have chosen rather to sojourn, than (c) "to dwell by himself in his own hired house:" If we consider, that, in the several epistles which St Paul wrote from Rome, there is not the least mention of St Peter; that in that to the Colossians in particular, he tells them plainly, that of all the Jews at Rome, he had no (d) "fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, which had been a comfort unto him, save only Aristarchus, Marcus, and Jesus, who was called Justus," which evidently excludes St Peter; and in that to Timothy, complains, that, (e) "at his first answer at Rome, no man stood with him, but all forsook him," which we can hardly suppose St Peter would have done, had he then been there: Nay, if we consider that, in the same epistle, he

* The impostor who composed these acts, which are supposed to have been written by Abdias, gives himself out to have been a bishop, ordained at Babylon by the apostles themselves when they were upon their journey into Persia. The work is neither ancient nor authentic. It was known neither to Eusebius nor St Jerome, nor any of the fathers that lived before them; and yet, according to the author who says that he wrote it in Greek, it contains in substance, 1st, The Acts of St Peter, or, according to its present title, The Recognitions of St Clement, a work stuffed with such visions and fables as must come originally from the Ebonites. 2dly, The Acts of St Paul, which pretends to be a continuation of that apostle's history, from the second year of his first voyage to Rome to the end of his life. 3dly, The Acts of St John the Evangelist, which, though mentioned by Epiphanius

and St Austin, contains incredible stories of this apostle. 4thly, The Acts of St Andrew, mentioned by St Austin, and received by the Manichees, but different from that which we have at present under the name of the priests of Achaia. 5thly, The acts of St Thomas, mentioned by the same father, and received by the same heretics, as containing that apostle's travels into India, and the sufferings which he there underwent. 6thly, The acts of St Matthias, wrote originally in Hebrew, but what critics will not allow to be genuine. And, 7thly, The acts of St Philip, which, as well as the Gospel that goes under his name, was held in great esteem by the Gnostics. *Calmet's Dict. and Pref. sur les Actes des Apôtres.*

(a) Rom. i. 11, 12.

(b) Acts xxviii. 15.

(c) Ver. 30.

(d) Col. iv. 10, 11.

(e) 2 Tim. iv. 16.

tells Timothy, that (a) "Luke was the only person that was with him;" that Crescens was gone to one place, Titus to another, and Tychicus to another, we cannot imagine, either that St Peter at that time was at Rome, or that he had lately gone from thence, since, had it been so, St Paul, no doubt, would have taken notice of him as well as of the rest, unless we may suppose that he was a person so inconsiderable as not to be worth the remembering, and his errand of so small importance as not to deserve a place in St Paul's account, as well as that of Crescens to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

Upon the whole, therefore, we may conclude, that at the time when St Paul was first at Rome, no footsteps are to be found of St Peter's having been there; and yet, notwithstanding this, to deny that he was ever there at all, is (b) to oppose the current of all antiquity, and the unanimous consent of persons of great eminence and authority, who lived near enough the times of the apostles, to know the truth and certainty of what they reported, and who have told us, that Peter baptized in Tiber, as John the Baptist did in the river Jordan; that in the days of Nero he was crucified; that the church of Rome was happy in the having its doctrines sealed with apostolic blood; and that the two glorious apostles, Peter and Paul, having founded and constituted this church, delivered the care of it over unto Linus: For we must observe, that whenever the ancients speak of the bishops of Rome, and the first originals of that church, they equally attribute the foundation and government of it to Peter and Paul, making the one as much concerned in it as the other. In short, no one that has any reverence for antiquity can deny that St Peter was at Rome; but then it is highly probable that he came not thither till some few years before his death; that there he joined with St Paul in preaching the Gospel, and that both there sealed the testimony of it with their blood.

The design of St Stephen's speech to the Jews is apparently this,—To answer the charge of blasphemy against him, for having spoken somewhat slightly of the perpetual duration of their temple, and the obligation of the ceremonial law; and this he does, by shewing that the law (for which at this time they expressed so fierce a zeal, as if salvation could be attained no other way) could not possibly be of that weighty consequence and absolute necessity as they imagined:

1st, (c) Because it appears, from the history of Abraham and the patriarchs, that their ancestors pleased and continued in the favour of God for more than four hundred years without it; and therefore, since these were God's peculiar and elect, before the law was given, this law could not be the only covenant and dispensation for the salvation of mankind, exclusive of all others.

2dly, (d) Because the very prophet, at whose hands they received the law, gave them warning of another eminent prophet, whom God (in ages to come) would "raise up from among them like unto him," i. e. a law-giver too, to whom every soul among them was commanded, upon pain of utter excision, to yield attention and obedience; and that, consequently, preaching the faith and obedience of Jesus, who was that very prophet, could not be blasphemy against God or Moses.

3dly, (e) Because the law, for which they now pretended so great a reverence, was plainly insufficient to contain them in their duty, as appeared from their frequent relapses into rebellion and idolatry, which the prophets sharply reproached them with, and threatened with so many severe punishments; and therefore, as the ancient prophets thought it no profanation, either of the law or the temple, to denounce the abolishing of the one, and the demolishing of the other; so was it none in him to declare

(a) 2 Tim. iv. 11, 12.
(d) Acts vii. 37, 38.

(b) Vid. *Cave's Life of St Peter*.
(e) Ibid. vcr. 39—50.

(c) Acts vii. 2—37.

A. M. 4012, the abrogation of the former and the utter ruin of the latter, to a generation of men
&c. or 5509.
Ann. Dom. now ripe for destruction.

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This is the substance of St Stephen's speech, which is far from being incongruous or immethodical; though, had he been permitted to bring it to a conclusion, (as it is plain it was interrupted by the noise and clamour of the rabble) it might have appeared to a better advantage. This however must be said in vindication of what are supposed to be errors in it,—1st, (a) That Terah might die in Charran, before his son Abraham removed into Canaan. For though it be said that, (b) at "seventy years of age, he begat Abraham, Nahor, and Haran," yet it does not therefore follow, that Abraham was the eldest of these. It is not the eldest, but the worthiest that is frequently first named in Holy Writ; for that Haran, who is last named, was considerably older than Abraham, is evident from Abraham's marrying his daughter, who was only ten years younger than himself. And therefore, if we do but suppose that, sixty years after that Terah began to beget children, he begat Abraham, the father will be two hundred and five years old, (c) at which age he died, when the son was no more than seventy-five, at which time he removed into Canaan (d).—2dly, (e) That though there be a difference between Moses and St Stephen, in the number of those who went down with Jacob into Egypt; yet this only arises from the different designs of the two accountants. For the design of Moses is to tell us how many Jacob and his offspring amounted to, omitting his sons wives; that of St Stephen, how many all the kindred were whom Joseph called into Egypt. In the light that Moses considers them they were seventy, but then several of these must be left out of St Stephen's number, viz. Joseph and his two sons, who were in Egypt already, Hezron and Hamul, who were not yet born, and Jacob whom he reckons apart. Now, take out these six from the seventy, and there will remain sixty-four, which, by adding the eleven wives of Jacob's sons, are just seventy-five.—3dly, That St Stephen no where insinuates that Jacob was buried in Sychem; for his words are, (f) "so Jacob went down into Egypt, and there died, he and our fathers, and were carried, i. e. our fathers, were carried over into Sychem:" (g) for if Joseph desired to have his bones carried into the land of Canaan there to be interred, there is reason to believe, that the other fathers desired the same, as having the same faith in the promises, and the same interest in the land that Joseph had; and that if they did desire the same, the rest of the tribes, bearing the same honour to their patriarchs that the tribe of Joseph did to him, would think themselves equally concerned to preserve their bones, in order to be carried out of Egypt with them, and to be buried together with Joseph's bones (as not improbably they were) at Sychem, though the remains of Jacob might be laid in another place.

It is a deference, I think, which we owe to the Spirit of God, whenever we find an opposition between sacred and profane authors that cannot be well reconciled, to impute the error or mistake to the latter: Now the Jewish historian Josephus tells us of one Theudas, who, in the fourth year of Claudius, set up for a great prophet and worker of miracles, but was soon routed, and destroyed by Cuspius Fadus, the Roman governor; and St Luke, as he represents the sentiments of Gamaliel, tells us of one of the same name, who arose in the reign of Augustus, and some time before the insurrection of Judas the Gaulanite, which happened upon account of the taxation, when Cyrenius was governor of Syria: But why should we account both these, who are so widely distant in point of time, to be one and the same person? Instead of charging Gamaliel, or rather St Luke, with a lapse of memory in this piece of chronology, it is more reasonable to think, (h) that the Theudas of Josephus, and that of Gamaliel, were two

(a) *Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah*, part ii. pag. 85. (b) Gen. xi. 26. (c) *Ibid.* ver. 22.
(d) See vol. i. of this Work, p. 246, 247. (e) *Kidder*, *ibid.* p. 86. (f) Acts vii. 15, 16.
(g) *Kidder* *ibid.* pag. 89. and *Whitby's Annot.* in locum. (h) *Whitby's Annotations*, and *Calmet's*
Commentary in locum.

men, but, not unlikely, father and son, or tutor and scholar; and that this name was given to the latter Theudas, (even as parents call their own children by their names) or that he himself assumed it, in imitation of the former Theudas, whom he delighted to follow in his appellation, as well as his enthusiastic folly. To this purpose Origen informs us, that, having gathered from the Scriptures, that the time of the Messiah was come, first Theudas, and after him Judas of Galilee, raised tumults in the time of the taxing; and therefore the fathers unanimously say, that those words of our Saviour, "all that came before me are thieves and robbers," do relate to these two, Theudas, and Judas of Galilee. So extremely evident it is, that the ancient fathers agreed in this, viz.—That there was a Theudas, pretending to great matters, even before the coming of our Lord, though his insurrection was so trifling, having but (a) about four hundred men who joined him, that the Jewish historian has taken no notice of it.

Another concession, that I think we may fairly claim in behalf of the sacred penmen, is, that the same licence of expression, which profane writers make so much use of, may sometimes be allowed them; which will quite destroy the objection against the hyperbolical phrase in St Luke, of (b) Jews residing at Jerusalem out of every nation under heaven; though, upon a short enquiry into the several dispersions of that people, we may be able, in some measure, to vindicate the truth of it, even in the very letter.

To this purpose we may observe, that before their final dispersion by the Romans, the Jews had suffered two captivities, or great dispersions, besides some smaller scatterings. The first was of the ten tribes of Israel by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, who is said to have carried them away, (c) and planted them in Halah and Habar, and in the cities of the Medes; and as these never returned to dwell in their own country, they are the Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, i. e. the Persians of the province of Elymais, whom St Luke, (d) in his subsequent enumeration, intends. The second captivity was by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, when he carried away the other two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and (e) placed them in Babylon, and other of his territories. Now, though a good part of these, at the end of seventy years, returned from their captivity, yet great numbers of them, finding themselves happily situated under princes, who indulged them a free exercise of their religion, never visited their native country, except it was at some of their great annual festivals; and of the number of these, we may suppose those to be whom St Luke calls (f) the dwellers in Mesopotamia. Besides these two great dispersions, there happened a third in the days of Ptolemy Soter (g), who surprised the city of Jerusalem, and carrying away above an hundred thousand of its inhabitants, placed them in his garrisoned cities, and other places dependant on Alexandria.

Now from these three principal dispersions did proceed those lesser scatterings in all parts of the Roman empire and elsewhere. From that of Babylon and Mesopotamia sprang those (h) of Cappadocia, Pontus, Phrygia, Pamphylia, and other parts of Asia Minor; and from that of Egypt and Alexandria, were derived those of Libya, Cyrene, and all other Hellenists whatever, in the several parts of the Roman empire. Add to all this, the many natives of Judea itself, who, upon one occasion or other, chose to live among the Gentiles, and more especially at Rome, which was then the metropolis of the whole world; and from hence might proceed (i) those strangers of Rome, Jews and Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, whom the apostle, in like manner, enumerates.

Agrippa, we read in his speech to the Jews, dissuading them from rebelling against the Romans, for fear of bringing a sad calamity, not upon themselves only, but upon the whole nation, wherever dispersed among the Gentiles, sticks not to say, that (k)

(a) Acts v. 36.

(b) Chap. ii. 5.

(c) 2 Kings xvii. 6.

(d) Acts. ii. 9.

(e) 2 Kings xxiv. 16.
ii. 9, 10.

(f) Acts ii. 19.

(g) Joseph. Antiq. l. 12. c. 2.

(h) Acts

(i) Ibid. ver. 11.

(k) Joseph. de Bello, l. 2. c. 16.

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"there was no people in the world who had not some of their nation dwelling among them;" and therefore we need less wonder, that we find the Sacred History asserting, that Jews of every nation under heaven were at this time met at Jerusalem, when, (a) not only a great festival, in which "all their males were to appear before God," summoned them thither; but their earnest expectation likewise of the promised Messiah, whose time of coming, according to the prediction of their prophets, was now accomplished, might make them more desirous to return to their native country, there, with an holy impatience, "to wait for the consolation of Israel."

(b) What makes it very difficult to give a distinct account of the offices and orders of the Christian ministers in the apostolic age, is the shortness of the historical part of the New Testament, which seldom extends farther than the first plantation of churches; and the design of the epistolary part, which, being written to persons lately converted to Christianity, was to acquaint them with the principles of their religion, and to arm them against false teachers, rather than instruct them in the form of church government: However, by a due attention to what we read, we may observe,—That the apostles were the first and most distinguished of our Blessed Lord's disciples, chosen by him to be his more immediate attendants, and, in the course of his ministry, admitted to a greater confidence and familiarity than the rest: That upon his leaving the world, he commanded them to testify the truth of his resurrection and ascension, and to publish the doctrines and mysteries of the Gospel in all nations, and, at the same time, gave them authority to govern the churches which they should establish every where: (c) That, to enable them to discharge their weighty offices, they were endued with superior courage, and gifts extraordinary, that what they had in their instructions they might publish and testify to the greatest audience, and in times of the greatest danger: That having by this means spread the Christian religion far and wide, they settled churches in the several places, where they had made a sufficient number of converts, with proper ministers to attend the offices of religion, while themselves proceeded in the great affair of propagating the Gospel in other countries: (d) That in the churches which they thus had founded, they retained the chief authority, and had all other ministers, of what quality soever, subject to them, as appears from St Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus, indited in a style which sufficiently speaks a superiority over them: And that, in virtue of their commission from Christ, they exercised a power of making such laws and constitutions as were found necessary for the good government of the church; of enforcing these laws with such penalties as the nature of transgressions required; of ejecting the incorrigible from the communion of the saints; of pardoning and receiving the penitent; of conferring the gifts of the Holy Ghost; of choosing proper persons to administer in holy offices; and of appointing their successors to rule and preside in the church.

This is the most of what we learn concerning the apostles and their distinct offices: And in relation to the inferior ministers of the Christian church, we may observe,—That long before the departure of the apostles from Jerusalem, St James, called our Lord's brother, was made fixed bishop of that city; that his diocese (e), to speak in modern language, contained many myriads (*μυριάδες*) of Jews converted to the Christian faith; that he had under him many presbyters to feed the different portions of that large flock, besides seven deacons, who had been solemnly ordained by the apostles: That in the churches of Ephesus and Crete, St Paul gives Timothy and Titus plain rules for their conduct in the ordination of bishops and deacons; so that Timothy and Titus must have been bishops themselves, otherwise they could not have ordained others

(a) *Beausobre's* Annot. in locum.
(c) *Miscellanea Sacra*, Essay 2.
(e) Acts xxi. 18—22.

(b) Archbishop *Potter's* Discourse on Church Government.
(d) Archbishop *Potter* on Church Government.

to that office : That though the words bishop and elder * or presbyter be used promiscuously, and often applied to the same person, there was then an order superior to that, which entitled those who were placed in it to be called the *angels* or *apostles* of particular churches, such as the angels of the seven churches in the proconsular Asia (a), and Epaphroditus, St Paul's brother and companion in labour, called in our version (b) the *messenger*, but in reality the *apostle* (ἀπόστολος) of the Philippian converts ; and that, though persons of the highest order in the church are sometimes called *presbyters* or *elders* (as St John calls himself an *elder*, though at the same time he was chief bishop of Asia), yet this might be done upon different accounts, since the same man might be an *elder* with regard to his age, and an *apostle* or *angel* or *bishop* of a church with regard to his office : And that bishops were officers in the Christian church, appointed by the apostles to be their successors in the government of it, and in their absence, or upon their demise, to exercise the same functions as it was in the case of Timothy and Titus : That the elders, supposing them distinct from bishops, were those " who had been with Christ from the beginning," and having received the Holy Ghost at the same time that the apostles did, were sometimes chosen into their number (as were Matthias and Barnabas), and, upon account of their extraordinary gifts (though they were not fixed ministers), had a right to officiate wherever they came, a share in the government of the church, and a seat in all their councils and synods : That in the great variety of gifts which Christ bestowed upon his church, some of these elders, very probably, were prophets, whose principal work it was, by expounding the prophecies of the Old Testament, and foretelling future events to convince the Jews ; and others evangelists, who, by writing the Gospel by inspiration, and preaching it to infidels who never heard of it, made it their business to convert the Gentiles ; that, though in some churches, when first established, we find only a bishop and his deacons, without any mention of the intermediate order of presbyters ; yet when the number of Christians increased, the bishop ordained others to officiate in the congregations where he could not be present, and to assist him in the other parts of his pastoral charge ; and were at that time called teachers, and afterwards presbyters or priests : That these presbyters were a settled order in the church, superior to deacons, but, in the matter of ordination and confirmation by the imposition of hands, inferior to bishops, though, in all other respects, their

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

* Allowing it to be true, that these names in Scripture are used promiscuously, (which yet is by very learned men, and upon very good authority, denied) yet still this is no proof, that presbyters must be advanced to the dignity of bishops, or bishops sunk to the level of presbyters. For although the term presbyter is, at present, used to denote the office of those who assist the bishop, and are subject to him in discharging some of the ministerial functions, yet in the days of the apostles, the bishops might be called presbyters, though they had then other presbyters subject to them. For although all presbyters are not bishops, yet all bishops are presbyters ; although the former may not perform the function of the latter, the latter may perform the functions of the former ; what offices are incumbent upon a presbyter, those a bishop has a right to perform, and may therefore, upon that account, very justly be called a presbyter. It is allowed on all hands, that under the Jewish dispensation, there were three orders of ecclesiastical persons, the high priest, the priest, and the Levites ; and yet in the first institution of these orders, the word priest is used promiscuously, as well of the high priest as of the inferior priests ; so that Aaron himself, the first

high priest in the book of Moses, is never dignified with any higher character than that of a priest. But whoever, from this promiscuous use of his name, has attempted to prove that all the priests were equal to the high priest ? Or, that the sons of Aaron were of the same dignity and order with Aaron the father ? And yet this is the main argument, which the contenders for a party among the presbyters make use of to prove their assertion, viz. that because, in the writings of the apostles, bishops are sometimes (according to the opinion of some interpreters) called presbyters, bishops and presbyters were therefore both of one order ; but if being called by the same name makes an equality in ministerial functions, our Saviour, who is termed an apostle, Heb. iii. 1. a bishop or pastor, 1 Pet. ii. 25. a master or doctor, Matth. xxiii. 10. a minister or deacon, Rom. xv. 8. must, by this form of reasoning, be degraded to an equality with the apostles, with bishops, with masters, nay, even with deacons themselves, which is not even incongruous, but impious to assert. Bishop Smalridge's Sermons, p. 111.

(a) Rev. i. ii.

(b) Philip. ii. 25.

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equals, and alike empowered to dispense the word, administer the sacraments, and offer up the prayers of the people: That deacons (as their very name imports) were persons appointed to attend on the bishops, and (according to the original institution of their order) "to take care of the poor," i. e. to enquire into the necessities of every one, and to apply a suitable relief to them out of the church's treasure, though (from the examples of St Philip and Stephen) we find, that their employment likewise was to baptize converts and children, and to preach the Gospel to the adult: And that the brethren were properly what we now call the laity of the church; but then, as the laity at that time were endued with special gifts, by these they were entitled to have some share in the administration of the church; were present with the apostles and elders at the council of Jerusalem; and had leave given them to choose proper persons out of their body, and to present these to the apostles, while they were alive, and afterwards to the bishops, but had no power at all of their own accord to ordain or appoint them to any sacred office: We may observe, I say, that such were the several orders of men in the beginning of the Christian church, such the diversities of their gifts, and such the differences of their administrations. But as it must be owned, that several of these were extraordinary persons, and continued no longer than the apostolic age; so to have a full and distinct account of such standing officers as were to abide for ever, we must have recourse to the testimony of antiquity, which perfectly agrees in this,—That after the apostles days they were no other than bishops, presbyters, and deacons: And accordingly Ignatius (to mention one evidence for all), after he had been forty years bishop of Antioch (to which dignity he was promoted by the hands of Peter the apostle, and therefore cannot be supposed to be ignorant of the state of the primitive church), in his exhortation to the people to be obedient to the ministers of it, tells us of "the bishop presiding in the place of God; the presbyters as the council of the apostles; and the deacons as the ministers of Christ;" and therefore, says he, "he that is within the altar is pure; but whoever does any thing without the bishop, the college of presbyters, and the deacons, his conscience is defiled;" and therefore, says he again, "adhere to the bishop, the college of presbyters, and the deacons:"—A sufficient attestation that these were the standing ministers of the Christian church in those days.

That Timothy and Titus were bishops of Ephesus and Crete, and both such by the appointment of the apostle St Paul, we have the testimony of all antiquity to convince us; but if, by saying that they were bishops, we mean, that they took upon them these churches, or dioceses, as their fixed and peculiar charge, in which they were to preside for term of life, we are much mistaken. Upon St Paul's going to Macedonia (*a*), he exhorts "Timothy to abide at Ephesus," in order to correct several abuses; and yet (*b*), in his second epistle, we find him entreating him to come to Rome, where he continued (as the ancients conjecture) to the time of the apostle's martyrdom. In like manner, St Paul (*c*) "left Titus in Crete, to ordain elders in every city, and to set in order the things that were wanting;" but no sooner had he done this, than he sent for him the very next year to Nicopolis; and having sent Artemas to supply his place, took him along with him to Rome, and then sent him into Dalmatia, upon the great affair of propagating the Gospel, till at length, after the apostle's death, he returned again to Crete.

The truth is, these two persons were not only bishops but evangelists likewise; and the work of an evangelist (as Eusebius informs us) was this,—“To lay the foundation of the faith in barbarous nations, to constitute in them pastors, and, having committed to them the cultivating of these new plantations, to pass on to other countries and nations.” So that, according to this, these two evangelists were not in a condition to

(*a*) 1 Tim. i. 3.

(*b*) 2 Tim. iv. 9.

(*c*) Tit. i. 5.

reside in their respective dioceses. But still, if by bishops we only understand persons who had authority to ordain and govern the clergy of their provinces, and to exercise acts of discipline and censure over ecclesiastics, as well as private Christians, we cannot but think, that when we find (a) "Timothy set over the house of God," and in that house empowered (b) to make rules for the orderly celebration of Divine worship; to see that teachers (c) taught no other doctrine than what they had received from our Lord and his disciples; to commit the doctrine of the Gospel (d) "to faithful men who should be able to teach others;" and to ordain those whom he should find to be qualified (e), some to be bishops, and others deacons: When we find him authorized (f) to provide for the competent maintenance, and all due respect of church-offices; to take cognizance of accusations (g), even against elders; to (h) rebuke publicly those that sin; and to inflict censures proportionably to the crimes that are proved against them: And when we find Titus, in like manner, authorized to teach all degrees of men, and (i) "to exhort and rebuke them with all authority; to take cognizance of heretics; and such as did not repent (k) upon the second admonition, to reject from the communion of saints; (l) to set in order what St Paul had left unfinished; and to ordain those whom himself should approve "to be bishops and elders:" We cannot but think, I say, that, to all intents and purposes, they were bishops, and had the several parts of the apostolic authority committed to them; though in this they differed from such settled diocesan bishops as are among us, that the frequent calls of their evangelical office obliged them to be oftentimes absent from their charge.

St Paul, speaking of himself and his doctrine, has these remarkable words, (m) "I certify to you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not of man; for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ;" and therefore he styles himself "an (n) apostle, not of men, neither by man." Let us then observe a little, when it was that Jesus Christ vouchsafed him the revelation which he here speaks of, and then we may possibly find out the time when he first commenced an apostle. At his first conversion near Damascus, he saw a great light, and heard a voice issuing from heaven; but it does not appear that at this time he had any sight of Christ, or received any revelation from him, except (o) that he should go to Damascus, where it should be told him what was appointed for him to do. In Damascus, indeed, Ananias told him, that God had chosen him (p) "to know his will and see that Just One, and to hear the voice of his mouth, and (q) to carry his name to the Gentiles;" but this is rather a declaration of what was revealed to Ananias than any designation of Saul to the apostleship. Encouraged however by this notification from Ananias, and the inspiration which he received by the imposition of his hands, he began to preach in the name of Christ, and continued to do so for full three years with great eloquence and strength of argument; but so far was all this from gaining him the character of an apostle, that when he came to Jerusalem the first time after his conversion, (r) the brethren would not believe that he was so much as a disciple. It is no improbable opinion, therefore, (s) that it was at the second time of his coming up to Jerusalem, when, (as himself relates the matter) "while he was praying in the temple, he fell into a trance, and saw Jesus Christ saying unto him, (t) Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me, and therefore depart; for I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles:" It was at this time, I say, that he not only received his commission to preach the Gospel to the Gen-

From Acts. i.
10. to the end.

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| (a) 1 Tim. iii. 15. | (b) Ibid. ii. 1. | (c) Ibid. i. 3. | (d) 2 Tim. ii. 2. |
| (e) 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2, &c. | (f) Ibid. v. 17. | (g) Ibid. ver. 19. | (h) Ibid. ver. 20. |
| (i) Tit. ii. 15. | (k) Ibid. iii. 10. | (l) Ibid. i. 5, 6. | (m) Gal. i. 11, 12. |
| (n) Gal. i. 1. | (o) Acts ix. 6. and xxii. 10. | (p) Ibid. xxii. 14. | (q) Ibid. ix. 15. |
| (r) Ibid. 26. | (s) Miscell. Sac. Essay iii. | (t) Acts xxii. 18, 21. | |

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tiles, but the revelation of (a) the Gospel likewise which he was to preach, and the designation of the very person that was to accompany him in the work.

That he received such a revelation, (b) wherein God made known unto him "the mystery which, in other ages, was not known unto the sons of men, viz. that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel," himself testifies; and yet we have no clear account of any other interview between Christ and him than what happened here in the temple, upon his second coming to Jerusalem. Being thus furnished with a proper revelation, and a fellow-labourer to assist him in the propagation of it, he and Barnabas returned unto Antioch, where the Holy Ghost soon ordered the church (c) to separate them for the work whereunto he had called them, viz. in the vision which he vouchsafed Saul in the temple, when he was last at Jerusalem; and accordingly "the church (d) fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, having recommended them to the grace of God, and sent them away;" and they, being thus sent forth by the Holy Ghost, proceeded to the work of their ministry with great cheerfulness and unanimity; until, upon their second peregrination, a certain disagreement happened, which produced a separation between them.

It may not be amiss however to observe, that the design of the Holy Ghost in having this their perverseness recorded, was not only to testify the truth and sincerity of the apostolic history, which is not afraid to relate the faults and failings of its chief personages, whatever construction may be put upon them; but to show us likewise that the best Christians are subject to the same passions and infirmities with other men; and that therefore none ought to be too much elated with an opinion of their own piety, or to despise others whom they may imagine their inferiors. Nor must it be forgotten, that this benefit in particular accrued to St Mark, (who was the subject of their contention) viz. that the positiveness of St Paul not to take him in company, who, in their former journey, had so shamefully deserted them, made him more constant and resolved in the service of the church for the time to come, and gave the church this advantage, (as we hinted before) (e) that by means of the separation of two such eminent apostles, more people were converted, and a greater number of provinces (than otherwise would have been) visited with the glorious light of the Gospel.

The like benefit accrued to the church from the divine severity on Ananias and his wife Sapphira; for it was not any sentence of St Peter that destroyed them, but the righteous judgment of God, in punishing the hypocrisy, the covetousness, the sacrilege, and gross impiety wherewith their crime was aggravated. The custom in those times was, (f) "for as many as were possessors of lands to sell them, and to bring the prices of the things that were sold, and to lay them down at the apostles feet, that distribution might be made unto every man according as he had need." This charitable disposition among believers, Ananias and his wife made use of to obtain a false reputation, and to pass a cheat upon the apostles if they could. To this purpose they gave it out that they had devoted all their possessions (which perhaps were very large) to the use of the church, and accordingly sold them. "This, say they, will gain us the credit of being very charitable and religious persons; will make us be highly respected by the apostles, and, in a manner, idolized among the brethren. We purpose, however, not to give away our all upon this occasion, though we may pretend we do so, but will reserve a good portion to ourselves; and if we keep but our own counsel, who will find it out? The apostles indeed are persons endued with great gifts, but (g) 'what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him?' It is impossible for them to pry into our hearts: And therefore if we blab it not ourselves, we may

(a) Philip. ii. 2.
(c) Vide page 417 of this volume, in the Notes.

(b) Ephes. iii. 3, &c.

(c) Acts xlii. 2.
(f) Acts iv. 34, 35.

(d) Ibid. 3, 4.
(g) 1 Cor. ii. 11.

by this means put out our money to good interest, and by laying down a part of the price at the apostles feet, (as others have done the whole) be entitled to the same right of relief from the public stock which others, who have parted with their all, are admitted to, and at the same time retain a comfortable subsistence for ourselves. All that we have to do, then, is to be stedfast and uniform in our story, and then we may defy the Spirit of God itself, which the apostles make such boast of to detect us.”

From Acts ii.
10. to the end.

This seems to be a natural comment upon their contrivance and conspiracy ; and if so, (a) the Jews, who are apt to object against Christians the severity of what they suffered, would do well to remember, that the law of Moses allowed of no atonement for wilful sacrilege, but (b) left the delinquent to be cut off by the hand of heaven, as Ananias here was : Nor should it be forgotten, (c), that as we find God, under the law, more severe in his punishment of those who first offended in offering strange fire, (as in the case of Nadab and Abihu) and violated the Sabbath, (as in the case of the man who gathered sticks on that day), and especially against those who rose up against Moses the prophet, and Aaron the priest of the Lord, (as in the case of Korah and his company), there is the like reason that the first great offence of this kind, under the Gospel dispensation, should receive exemplary punishment from the hand of God, that others might stand in more terror of those sins, which thus affronted that Holy Ghost, by whose power the Christian religion began now to be propagated ; for so the text tells us, (d) “ that great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things, and believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.”

St Paul, speaking of his own easy compliance to the several tempers and humours of those with whom he conversed, (e) “ Though I be free from all men, (says he) yet have I made myself a servant unto all, that I might gain the more ; unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews ; to them that are under the law as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law ; to them that are without the law, as without the law, that I might gain them that are without the law ; to the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak : I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some, and this I do for the Gospel’s sake :” And doubtless for the Gospel’s sake it was that he appointed Timothy to be circumcised. He knew full well the prejudices which the Jews had conceived against persons who had not submitted to that ordinance ; that they would not suffer them to appear, much less to argue and discourse in any of their synagogues : And therefore, being determined to take Timothy for the companion of his travels, (to make his access more easy to the Jews, and himself a fitter instrument in their conversion) he thought proper to give him this passport as it were : (f) “ Circumcision (he knew) was nothing, and uncircumcision was nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.” (g) In its own nature it was a thing indifferent, neither required by the Christian religion, nor inconsistent with it ; and under this consideration he was willing it should pass upon Timothy : But when it came to be required as a duty, and a duty necessary to salvation ; to be used as the distinguishing mark of a Jew, in opposition to Christians ; to be made an obligation to the total observance of the law, and a rock of offence to those of a different persuasion ; it then became evil, and inconsistent with the doctrine of the Gospel. Under this sense it is that St Paul so frequently and so loudly declaims against it ; and upon these considerations it was that he would not allow Titus to be circumcised, notwithstanding the earnest importunity of some people of reputation at Jerusalem.

(a) *Kidder’s Demonstration of the Messiah*, part ii. page 85.

(b) *Joshua* vii. 18.

(c) *Whitby’s Annotations on Acts* v. 1.

(d) *Whitby’s Annotations on Acts* v. 11, 14.

(e) *1 Cor.* ix. 19, &c.

(f) *Ibid.* vii. 19.

(g) *Kidder’s Demonstration of the Mes-*

siah, part ii. page 93.

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(a) With what a jealous eye St Paul was looked upon by all judaizing Christians, as a person averse to the Mosaic institutions, is sufficiently known. These men had been at Antioch, where, having insidiously watched the liberty which he took in omitting all legal observances, they, when he came to Jerusalem, informed the church against him, that he preached to the Gentiles, who were not circumcised; that he conversed freely and familiarly with them; that Titus, who was a Greek, was at that time with him; and therefore, to put the matter upon an issue, they urged that this intimate friend of his might be circumcised. Their policy in this was visible. Had they carried their point against St Paul, they would soon have informed the church of Antioch, that, by the order of the council at Jerusalem, (b) Titus had been obliged to be circumcised; and this, besides the defeat given to the apostle, and baffle to his doctrine of Christian liberty, would have proved a great scandal and discouragement to the heathen converts, and an impediment to the progress of the Gospel, which at that time began to be more successful among the Gentiles than the Jews. And therefore St Paul was resolute, and took especial care that Titus should not be circumcised. So that, upon the whole, it appears that St Paul was no ways inconsistent with himself, though he varied his conduct according to the different circumstances he found himself under. He ordered Timothy (whose mother was a Jewess) to be circumcised, because his circumcision would be a means to forward his ministry, and to gain him an easier access to the Jews; but he refused to have Titus, who was a Gentile, circumcised, because his circumcision would have been a means to scandalize the brethren, to alienate their minds from the Christian faith, and a great obstruction to the course of the Gospel. In short, (c) Titus he would not suffer to be circumcised, thereby to shew that circumcision was not necessary; but Timothy he allowed to be circumcised, that, by his practice, it might appear that such ceremonies were not evil in themselves, but might be used without any crime until by degrees they came to be abolished.

The like may be said of his own compliance with certain ceremonies of purification, at the request of St James and the other elders at Jerusalem, and for the satisfaction of the Jewish converts there. (d) "Thou seest, brother, (say they) how many thousands of Jews there are who believe, and they are all zealous for the observance of the law." The law of Moses was held in so great veneration, as being the contrivance of God himself, (e) "ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator," ratified by miracles, and entertained by all their forefathers, as the peculiar prerogative of their nation for so many generations, that even those who, by the evidence of the Gospel, were prevailed upon to embrace Christianity, could not overcome the prejudice of education, but still continued their adherence to those legal rites and customs wherein they had been brought up. Some of them indeed were for obtruding them upon the Gentile converts, but the most moderate of them all (even bishops and elders, as well as the laity) were for a punctual observation of them among the Jewish. They were convinced, that these institutions were of Divine original. They knew of no revelation made by God, that they were to cease after the death of their Messiah. Our Blessed Saviour, in his Gospel, had said little or nothing of them; nay, in saying "that he came not to destroy the law and the prophets," he seems to have given a fresh sanction to them; and because he foreknew that the destruction of their temple, and their exclusion from their own land, would in a short time make it impossible for them to observe them, he had given none of the apostles (except it was St Paul) any intimations concerning them; and therefore it is not to be wondered at, that men in these circumstances should advise St Paul (for the good of so many thousand souls, as might otherwise take exception at his conduct) to comply with the observance of some things, which as yet,

(a) *Hammond's* Annotations on Philip. ii. 3.
Commentary on Acts xvi.

(b) *Ibid.* on Acts xvi.
(d) Acts xxi. 20, &c.

(c) *Calmet's*
(e) Gal. iii. 19.

they did not think abrogated. So that, in the apostles at Jerusalem, there was no de- From Acts i.
10. to the end. sign of deluding the people into a false belief by St Paul's conforming himself to some ritual observances, because their present persuasion was, that it was a duty incumbent upon him so to do. St Paul indeed knew very well, that our Saviour by his death (a) "had abolished the law of commandments contained in ordinances;" but since these were observances belonging to the temple, which was yet standing, and God had not by any express declaration made to the Jews prohibited the continuance of them, he might lawfully submit to this compliance with them, in order to prevent the scandal of the believing Jews, which might otherwise alienate them from the Christianity they had embraced, and to promote, by his future preaching among them, the conversion and salvation of the unbelieving

(b) "Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves," is a lesson which our Saviour gave his disciples, and which St Paul, more especially at this time, when he was every where surrounded by his enemies, had occasion to put in practice. Most casuists are of opinion, that by all innocent men it is allowable to sow divisions among the wicked, because the union of the wicked is as prejudicial to the cause of religion as the disunion is destructive to it. If therefore St Paul, by an innocent address, could set the Pharisees and Sadducees at variance, there is no reason to be given why he should decline it. Had he indeed, in so doing, but implicitly denied himself to be a Christian, this had been an inexcusable crime; but both the Pharisees and Sadducees were too well acquainted with him and his conversion ever to put that construction upon his words. The resurrection of the dead was a principle doctrine of the Christian religion; and as it was coincident with the faith of the Pharisees, I cannot see how he could use a more proper argument to convince them of their fault and folly in persecuting Christians, than to shew, that they themselves did hold one of the prime articles of the Christian faith; and if by declaring this doctrine of Christianity before them, he engaged the Pharisees on his side, and thereby declined the malice and rage of his enemies, who can say, but that, in this putting the wisdom of the serpent in execution, he still preserved the harmlessness of the dove?

But this can hardly be said of St Peter's prevarication at Antioch. (c) He, at his first coming down to that place, made use of the liberty which the Gospel had given him. He familiarly ate and conversed with the Gentile converts, accounting them, now that the "partition wall was broken down, no longer (d) strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." This he had been taught by the vision of the sheet let down from heaven. This had been lately decreed, and he himself had promoted, and subscribed it in the Synod at Jerusalem. This he had before practised towards Cornelius and his family, and justified the action to the satisfaction of his accusers: And this he had freely and innocently done at Antioch, till some of the Jewish brethren coming thither, for fear of offending and displeasing them, he withdrew his converse from the Gentiles, as if it had been unlawful for him to hold communion with uncircumcised persons. In this affair, as he himself acted against the light of his own mind and judgment, condemning what he had approved, and destroying what before he had built up; so hereby he confirmed the Jewish zealots in their inveterate error; cast infinite scruples into the minds of the Gentiles; revived the old feuds and prejudices between them; destroyed that union and harmony, which before his coming prevailed in the church of Antioch; and in short, brought matters to that issue, that the whole number of Jewish converts, following his example, separated themselves from the company of Gentile Christians, insomuch, that St Paul was forced to interpose his authority with rebukes.

(a) Eph. ii. 15.

(b) Matt. x. 16.

(c) *Cave's Life of St Peter.*

(d) Eph. ii. 19.

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(a) "Mark them who cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them," is the instruction which he gave the Romans; and had he put it in practice upon this occasion, there had then been some grounds to complain of his † rudeness and incivility to St Peter; but, in opposing his conduct where it was blameable, and in telling him of his faults when they were notorious, he acted (even in the eye of the Mosaic law) the part of a kind brother; for (b) "thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him;" where, if not to rebuke a brother, is to hate him; to rebuke him, by consequence, is to love him; and therefore the royal Psalmist makes it the matter of his prayer, (c) "let the righteous smite me friendly, and reprove me, but let not their precious balm break my head."

But though St Paul might think it his duty, and no unkindness to St Peter, to oppose him in his dissimulation; yet we find him no where disagreeing with St James in any point of Christian doctrine. To silence the clamours of those indeed who pleaded for the necessity of circumcision, and other Jewish ordinances under the Christian dispensation, and were for imposing them upon the Gentile converts as things essential to salvation, in several parts of his epistles, but more particularly of those to the Romans and Galatians, he argues, that our acceptance with God here, and admission to happiness hereafter, which he calls by the term of justification, depends upon our sincere belief of the Gospel, and our living answerably to such a belief (which are comprehended in the word faith), and not upon any observance of the Jewish rites and ceremonies, which he calls the deeds of the law. This doctrine of justification by faith came, in a short time, to be perverted to very bad purposes, and (d) some there were, who, from the authority of St Paul, endeavoured to persuade themselves and others that, so long as they did but believe the Gospel in the naked notion and speculation of it, it was enough to recommend them to the favour of God, and serve all the purposes of justification and salvation, however they shaped and steered their lives. To countermine the designs of these men, and to beat down this strong hold of libertinism, St James, who wrote his epistle subsequent to those of St Paul, and as a kind of comment upon them, endeavours to shew the insufficiency of a naked faith and empty profession of religion; that it is not enough to recommend us to the Divine acceptance, and to justify us in the sight of heaven, barely to believe the Gospel, unless we obey and practise it; and that such a belief, destitute of this evangelical obedience, is (e) "like the body without the spirit, dead," and unavailable to our salvation: And therefore he concludes, that, by the practice of the several virtues of the Christian religion, which he terms works, a man is justified, and not by a mere notional belief of the things recorded in the Gospel, which he calls faith only.

(f) Considering then the difference of the adversaries which these two apostles had to contend with, that St Paul was engaged with false brethren, Jewish converts, who were for joining the ceremonial part of the law with the faith of the Gospel and the practice of the Christian religion; and that St James, on the contrary, had to do with libertines and hypocrites, men, who having abused St Paul's doctrine of faith and grace, and "wrested it to their own destruction," had thereupon abandoned themselves to all

(a) Rom. xxi. 17.

† Porphyry, that subtle enemy of the Christian religion, makes use of this reproof which St Paul gave St Peter, as an argument against them both, charging the one with error and falsehood, and the other with rudeness and incivility; and says, that the whole was but a compact of forgery and deceit, while the princes of the church did thus fall out among themselves; and so sensible were some of this, in the primitive ages of Christianity, that rather than such

a disgrace, as they accounted it, should be reflected upon St Peter, they pretended, that besides the apostle, there was one of the same name, one of the seventy disciples, and that it was he whom St Paul withstood, and reprov'd at Antioch, as guilty of this prevarication; But this is a crude and useless evasion. *Cave's Life of St Peter.*

(b) Lev. xix. 17.

(c) Psal. cxli. 5.

(d) *Cave's Life of St Paul.*

(e) James ii. 26.

(f) *Beausobre's Pref. sur l'Epi'tre de St Jaques.*

manner of vice, and looked upon good works as things purely indifferent ;—considering this, I say, we shall find the two apostles arguing very properly with the persons whom they had in view, and, though they do not advance assertions absolutely the same, are far from opposing or contradicting one another. “Legal observances will not save us, says St Paul, nor will a bare belief of the Gospel save us, says St James. A lively faith that is fruitful of good works will save us, says St Paul ; and so will the practice of all moral and Christian virtues, says St James.” Thus admirably do the two apostles agree and conspire to explain each other.

Nay, to clear the character of St Paul still farther, we may observe, that in those very epistles where he seems to extol faith, and debase the efficacy of works most, he nevertheless makes them the indispensable condition of our salvation : For, having laid it down as a certain truth, that (a) “not the hearers of the law are just before God, but that the doers of the law shall be justified,” he plainly asserts, that our misery or happiness in a future state depends upon our good or ill deportment here ; for (b) “God will render to every man according to his works, tribulation and anguish upon every soul that doth evil ; but glory, honour, and peace upon every soul that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.” In another place, having spoken of the happiness of our redemption from original sin, by the merits and mercies of Jesus Christ, he asks these questions, (c) “What shall we say then ? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound ? God forbid. How shall we, who are dead to sin, live any longer therein ?” And in like manner, having made this comfortable declaration, (d) “there is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus,” lest we should mistake his meaning, and think that an empty faith, or bare profession of Christianity, was enough to entitle us to this blessedness, he adds, “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit ;” and elsewhere gives us this caution, (e) “Be not deceived, God is not mocked ; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap ; for he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”*

There seems, at first view indeed, to be some contrariety between the decree of the council at Jerusalem and the latitude which St Paul allows in relation to meats offered to idols : But to pass a right judgment concerning these offerings, we must know,—(f) That, besides what was eaten of them in the idol’s temple (which eating was an act of religious worship, and communion with the idol, as our eating the bread of the sacrament is a communion with Christ) ;—besides this, I say, there was a certain portion of those sacrifices which fell to the priests, and which they, having no use for, sold to others, who afterwards exposed it to sale promiscuously among other meat upon the shambles, where it was bought up and spent in private families without any distinction, whether it had or had not been offered to idols. Now, as for the former way of eating meats thus offered, namely, in the idol’s temple, this the apostle utterly disallows as absolutely unlawful ; but the other only under some circumstances : For he allows, that it might be lawfully bought among other meat in the market, and being so bought, might be eaten in any private house without the least sin ; only with this caution, that whereas there were some who well understood that meat could have no defiling quality imprinted upon it by its consecration to an idol ; and others (on the contrary), having not so much knowledge, supposed, that its consecration to an idol left upon it such a polluting quality, and near relation to the idol, as defiled the eater ; the former sort might freely and innocently eat such meat in private families, provided it was not before those of the latter sort, who, through weakness, having an opinion of the unlaw-

(a) Rom. ii. 13.

(b) Ibid. ver. 6, &c.

(c) Ibid. vi. 1.

(d) Ibid. viii. 1.

(e) Gal. vi. 7.

* [See the Supplementary Dissertation on some of the principal doctrines of the Christian religion, appended to Chap. iv. of this Book.]

(f) South’s Sermons, vol. iii.

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fulness of such meats, might nevertheless be induced to use the same liberty, though their consciences, in the mean time, having quite another judgment in this matter, esteemed the eating them little better than idolatry.

Now the argument by which the apostle abridges the liberty of the former sort of converts, in condescension to those of the latter sort, proceeds upon the strength of this assertion, that the lawfulness of mens actions depends not solely either upon the lawfulness of their subject-matter, nor yet upon the conscience of the doers of them, considered in itself, but as considered with reference to the consciences of others, to whom, by the law of charity, they stand bound so to behave themselves, as by none of their actions to give them occasion of sin. From which plain state of the case, it appears, St Paul is so far from giving the least encouragement to the eating of meats offered unto idols, that, in the first place, he uses the most cogent arguments, viz. the regard we ought to have to our neighbour's soul, and the danger of offending Christ, by wounding and destroying those members of his mystical body, "for which he died," to engage us to a total abstinence; and then proposes his own generous resolution to enforce his advice, (a) "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh whilst the world stands, that I make not my brother to offend."

(b) "Whatsoever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven;" as in another place, (c) "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained," are words which are generally supposed to contain the commission which our Blessed Lord gave his apostles, to exercise a judicial power over the members of his church, by censuring offenders, and, upon their repentance afterwards, remitting the censures which were passed on them. To this purpose we find St Paul telling the Corinthians, that (d) "though he should boast of the authority which the Lord had given him, for edification and not for destruction, he should not be ashamed," and putting that authority in practice against the person who had committed incest among them; (e) "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such an one unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord."

(f) Now, in order to know the meaning of this "delivering unto Satan," we must observe, that the church, or kingdom of Christ, was erected in opposition to Satan's kingdom, and therefore every Christian, at his baptism, covenants to "renounce the devil and all his works," and is thereupon admitted into the church of Christ, and taken under his protection; but when men notoriously break their baptismal covenant, and, instead of obeying Christ, openly adhere to the devil, they are then reduced to the state of heathens, who are under the dominion of the prince of this world: And, as the Scriptures generally ascribe all sort of calamities which befall mankind to the procurement of the devil; so the pains and diseases of the body, which in this first age usually attended the sentence of excommunication, were supposed to proceed from the devil, whose malice the Divine wisdom might then employ as a common sergent and executioner, to inflict some bodily punishment upon every notorious offender, thereby to deter others from the like provocations, and thereby to bring him to consideration and repentance, and so save his soul at the great day of judgment.

Josephus, in his History of the Jewish Wars (g), tells us, that the Essenes, one of the strictest sects among them, upon their deprehending any of their society in a notorious wickedness, excluded him from the congregation, and whoever incurred that sentence generally came to a miserable end; and therefore we need less wonder, that

(a) 1 Cor. viii. 13.

(b) Matt. xviii. 18.

(c) John xx. 23.

(d) 2 Cor. x. 3.

(e) 1 Cor. v. 4, 5.

(f) Archbishop Potter's Discourse of Church Government.

(g) Lib. ii. c. 6.

God, at the first beginning of Christianity (*a*), and when it was wholly destitute of all civil coercive authority, did invest his apostles with a power of inflicting corporal punishments upon such as either opposed the progress of the Gospel, or offended grossly against its rules ; since this was an effectual means to keep the wicked in awe, to advance the cause of religion, and to conciliate respect to its ministers : For the proper end of all church censures (according to (*b*) Lactantius) is, “ not for revenge, but to support the honour of Christ’s laws, to admonish others to amend, and to warn all not to despise this salutary authority.”

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

St Paul’s advice to the governors of the church is far from exciting a spirit of persecution in them : For (*c*) though he arms the temporal magistrate with a sword, not only to be a terror to evil doers, but to cut off and execute notorious offenders ; yet to the spiritual magistrate he only gives a pastoral rod and a staff, neither of which are designed to destroy, but only to reform those that go astray. His first prescription is, to try gentle methods ; to begin with kind and fatherly admonitions, which, from persons in so high a station, may probably have a blessed effect, and restore the offender, (*d*) “ with all long-suffering in the spirit of meekness :” But if these prove too weak to awaken a sinner who is fallen into the lethargy of obduration, his next degree of discipline is (*e*) sharp reproof and severe threats, and (*f*) a public exposition of his crime : But in case he be so far depraved as to have lost all sense of shame, his last direction is to eject him out of the church, who, while he continues in it, will be a perpetual scandal to it, and (*g*) give the enemies of the Lord an occasion to blaspheme ; however, only so to eject him, as that, upon his repentance and reformation, he may be restored again, and not (*h*) swallowed up (as the apostle tenderly expresses it) with over-much sorrow.

These are the rules which St Paul has laid down for the governors of the church, with respect to those under their care, who are either unsound in the faith, or retain the faith in unrighteousness. (*i*) This is the discipline which the fathers have given us so far a character of, as to call it “ the keeper of hope, the anchor of faith, the guide of our heavenly journey, the food and nourishment of good inclinations, and the mistress of all virtue.” Nor is it to be denied that (*k*) the church’s reputation was never so good as in the primitive times, when this discipline was exercised with vigour. Then her professed enemies admired her ; great numbers of proselytes daily flocked into her, and could not be restrained by the utmost torments which either human or diabolical malice could inflict ; whereas, since this godly discipline has been relaxed, though the church has been protected by the civil power, and furnished with far more splendor than before, fewer converts have been brought over to her, and too many of her own sons and members have lost their first love and zeal for her. But to proceed.

Upon supposition that Alexander the copper-smith was the same person with that Alexander who was concerned in (*l*) the tumult raised at Ephesus, we may imagine that he was a Jewish convert residing in that city ; that when he was seized by the common sergeants, and examined before the Jews, (as the word *προβάλλειν* there signifies) in the apology which he would have made to the people, his purpose was to have averted the danger from him, by laying it upon St Paul ; and that from this time, conceiving an hatred against the apostle, and (*m*) having put away a good conscience, he soon began to make shipwreck of his faith, and particularly to call in question the reality of a future resurrection ; a doctrine which St Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, had so largely insisted on.

(*n*) The philosophers in those days looked upon the body as the prison and sepulchre

(*a*) *Cave’s* Introduction to the Lives of the Apostles. (*b*) *De Irâ Dei*, p. 809. (*c*) *Comber’s* Discourse upon Ordination. (*d*) 2 Tim. iv. 2. Gal. vi. 1. (*e*) Tit. ii. 15. (*f*) 1 Tim. v. 20. (*g*) 2 Sam. xii. 14. (*h*) 2 Cor. ii. 7. (*i*) *Comber* on Ordination. (*k*) Archbishop *Potter’s* Discourse on Church Government. (*l*) Acts xix. 33. (*m*) 1 Tim. i. 19. (*n*) *Whitby’s* Annot. on 1 Cor. xv.

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of the soul, and that her happiness could not commence till after her dissolution from it. Upon which principle they argued, that it was not only an impossible thing, but an unjust and unworthy thing for God to raise the body in order to unite it to the soul, since the happiness of the soul consisted in being delivered from it, and its punishment in being confined to it. This notion Alexander, among others, having imbibed, began to put a new construction upon the doctrine of the resurrection, as if it imported only a renovation of our manners, and a resurrection from the death of sin unto a life of righteousness, which in all God's elect (as they were sure to rank themselves in that number) (a) was already past.

The resurrection of the dead, in its literal sense, was so fundamental a point, that St Paul puts the whole stress of the Christian religion upon it. (b) "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain; yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God, that he raised up Christ, whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." But though the denial of a future resurrection was implicitly a renunciation of the Christian religion, yet we do not find that Alexander had actually apostatised from it; for then the apostle would not have excommunicated him, because we find him claiming no authority but over such as were within the pale of the church; for (c) "what have I to do, says he, to judge them that are without? Those that are without, God judgeth."

The judgment, however, which he gave against Alexander, so incensed that heretic, that he pursued him as far as Rome, on purpose to oppose his doctrine and vilify his person, and perhaps to exhibit some accusations against him; which malicious proceeding might give the apostle occasion enough to say, that "the Lord would reward him according to his works:" For (d) so the king's manuscript reads it in the future tense, ἀποδώσει, and so the current of ancient interpreters do account it not an imprecation, but a prediction only of what, in the just judgment of God, would befall him; for pious men, say they, do neither wish for, nor rejoice in, nor desire to hasten the punishments of the wicked, though they sometimes foretel them.

St Paul, no doubt, when brought (e) before powers and magistrates, had a share in the promise of the assistance and direction of God's blessed Spirit, sufficient to enable him to make proper answers, and to secure him against the transgression of any law; and therefore we may presume, that when he treated the high priest with some severity of speech, he either did not know, or did not acknowledge him to be a person invested with that authority. (f) Since the time of his conversion, which was now about five and twenty years, he had been seldom at Jerusalem, and when he came thither, made but a short stay; so that he might very well be unacquainted with the high priest's person, especially if he had not on, at that time, the vestments peculiar to his function, and such as distinguished him from ordinary priests. The order of the pontifical succession, likewise, had been so totally destroyed, and both by the Jewish kings and Roman governors, the high priests placed and displaced so frequently, that a stranger, just come to Jerusalem, might not always know who was the present possessor of that dignity.

But even suppose that St Paul had known that Ananias was then in the chair, (g) yet as that pontiff is supposed to have obtained his office by bribery, the apostle, who had been taught by his master Gamaliel, that "whoever did so was neither a judge, nor deserved to be honoured as such," might demur to his title, and say, "I know very well that 'a ruler of the people' is not to be reviled, but that the person

(a) 2 Timothy ii. 18.

(b) 1 Corinthians xv. 13, &c.

(c) Ibid. v. 12, 13.

(d) Whitby and Hammond's Annotations on 2 Timothy iv. 14.

(e) Luke xii. 11, 12.

(f) Fleury's Ecclesiastical Hist. l. 1. pag. 80.
tions on Acts xxiii. 5.

(g) Grotius, Whitby, and Beausobre's Annota-

you speak of is the high priest I know not, i. e. I do not own or recognize him to be such, because he obtained that station in the church by very indirect means." Or suppose the apostle to speak ironically,—“I did not know, i. e. I did not apprehend that a person so far enraged, as to order a prisoner at the bar, when going to make his defence, ‘to be smitten on the mouth,’ could possibly be the high priest. This was a thing so little becoming his grave and venerable character, that I verily took him for some common man, and accordingly treated him with such language as the rudeness of his insult deserved: But since you now inform me that he is in reality the high priest, I beg pardon, because, be he what he will, ‘we are not to speak evil of the ruler of the people.’”

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

[The plain matter of fact, however, is, that Ananias was not then the high priest. He was high priest during the famine which took place in the fourth year of Claudius, mentioned in the eleventh chapter of the Acts. St Paul, who took a journey to Jerusalem at that period, could not have been ignorant of Ananias's being then in possession of the high priesthood; but soon after the holding of the apostolical council at Jerusalem, Ananias was dispossessed of his office, and sent prisoner to Rome, whence he was afterwards released, and returned to Jerusalem. Now during that period he could not be called high priest in the proper sense of the word, though Josephus has sometimes given him the title of ἀρχιερεὺς, taken in the more extensive meaning of a priest, who had a seat and voice in the Sanhedrim; and Jonathan, though we are not acquainted with the circumstances of his elevation, had been raised, in the mean time, to the supreme dignity in the Jewish church. Jonathan was murdered by the order of Felix, and between his death and the high priesthood of Ismael, who was invested with that office by Agrippa, elapsed an interval in which the dignity continued vacant. Now it happened precisely in this interval that St Paul was apprehended in Jerusalem; and the Sanhedrim being destitute of a president, Ananias undertook of his own authority the discharge of that office, which he executed with the greatest tyranny. It is probable therefore that St Paul, who had been only a few days in Jerusalem, might be ignorant that Ananias, whom he knew to have been dispossessed of the priesthood, had taken upon himself an office to which he was not entitled; and if so, he might naturally exclaim—“I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest!” Admitting him, on the other hand, to have been acquainted with the fact, the expression must be considered as an indirect reproof, and a tacit refusal to recognise usurped authority.] So that in whatsoever view we take of St Paul's conduct, there was nothing *incongruous* in his not knowing Ananias to be the high priest, which he certainly was not in reality, nor any thing *abject* in what is called the *retraction* of his words to him.

(a) “They that waited at the altar, in the Jewish church, were partakers of the altar; even so hath the Lord ordained, in the Christian church, that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel; but I have used none of these things” (says St Paul); and so far were the rest of the apostles from making any property of the money collected and laid at their feet, that we find them instituting the office of deacons, whose appointed business it was to see the regular distribution of it among the poor; which they never would have done had they preached the Gospel for the sake of the advantage they made of these contributions. The truth is, the ministers of God, in those days, had no respect to the secular emoluments of their vocation. They could shew (b) “hands that had ministered to their necessities, and to them that were with them.” They made it their glory, and the chief of their (c) reward, that “when they preached the Gospel they made the Gospel of Christ without charge;” and St Paul, in particular, had it in his power to tell the Corinthians, that (d) “when he was present with them he was charge-

(a) 1 Corinthians ix. 13.
(d) 2 Corinthians xi. 9.

(b) Acts xx. 34.

(c) 1 Corinthians ix. 18.

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able to no man." Considering then the narrowness of his circumstances, and the bashfulness of his temper, we may be apt to think that St Paul might be tempted to leave some small matters at Troas, in order to satisfy his host, rather than be (a) burdensome to any; but then the misfortune is, that this *quoniam* does not always signify a *cloak*. (b) The other things which St Paul desires Timothy to bring with him are books and parchments. The books are generally supposed to be the sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament; but as these were constantly read in all Christian, as well as Jewish assemblies, there was no occasion for sending so far as Troas for what might have been had any where; and therefore we rather think that they were some choice books of human literature, in which we find our apostle a great proficient, and that the parchments were his adversaria, or common-place books, wherein he wrote down whatever, in the course of his reading, he found worthy of his observation.

Now if, (c) according to some interpreters, the word *φελόντις* signifies a *piece of parchment folded up*, it will be indeed the same thing with the *μεμβράναι*, which St Paul afterwards mentions; but then, in this sense, it not only makes his directions to Timothy of a piece, as relating to things all of one kind, but makes the adverb *πάνιστα* (which, without this supposition, we could not so well account for) highly pertinent in this place: "The parchments which I left at Troas, with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments;" where the words *but especially*, seem naturally to refer to something mentioned before,

But suppose, that this *quoniam* does properly signify a *cloak*; yet who can tell but that this was the very penula, or cloak which St Paul's father received from the Romans, and transmitted to his son, as a mark and ensign of his being a Roman citizen, and which (now that St Paul was at Rome) he was obliged, upon all occasions, (to conciliate the good esteem of the people) to appear in. Nay, suppose that it was a common cloak, or garment made on purpose to defend him from the injuries of the weather; yet, now that the winter was approaching, we can see no incongruity in his sending for what he had left behind him in the hot season of the year, to keep him warm in the cold; though we cannot but admire (d) the modest poverty of so great an apostle, who, rather than be chargeable to any, orders Timothy to bring him a poor cloak, which he could not well want, from so remote a place as Troas.

That which makes it more difficult to resolve, what the contest between Michael and the devil, concerning the body of Moses, does properly mean, is, that this piece of history, to which St Jude alludes, is no where recorded in the Old Testament. We read indeed, in the prophet Zechariah, of (e) "Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right-hand (which was the place of him that impleaded another) to resist him;" and that the matter of controversy between them, was the re-edifying the temple, and restoring the service of God among the Jews, at Jerusalem, which Satan opposed: and hence (f) some have argued, that as the Christian church is frequently styled the body of Christ, by parity of reason, the Jewish church might be called the body of Moses, and that this is the whole that St Jude means. But that the Jews, and their service, should be called the body of Moses, or that the words in St Jude are to be referred to those in Zechariah, seems not very probable, because in that prophet there is no mention of Michael, or of the body, or death of Moses.

The death of Moses, and his burial, are thus related in the book of Deuteronomy. (g) "So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died in the land of Moab, and he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." From whence (h) others have argued, that as Michael was

(a) 2 Cor. xii. 14. (b) Bishop Bull's Sermons, vol. ii. (c) Hammond's Annotations on 2 Tim. iv. 13.
(d) Grotius, in locum. (e) Zech. iii. 1. (f) Hammond on Jude. (g) Deut. xxxiv. 5, 6.
(h) Whitby, Beausobre, Pool, &c. in locum.

appointed by God to bury the body of Moses in a place so secret, that the Jews should never find it out, the devil opposed the angel in this office, desiring to have his sepulchre known, that in process of time it might become a snare to a people who were so very prone to idolatry. This is the most obvious, and considering what work the devil has made in the world with the body of the saints and martyrs ever since, may well be esteemed the truest sense of the passage.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

St Paul's fighting with beasts at Ephesus, is a passage likewise which is neither mentioned in the history of the Acts, nor in (a) the catalogue of his afflictions; and therefore some have imagined, that this fight of his was nothing else but the scuffle he had with Demetrius the silversmith, and his companions, savage men, who might better deserve the name of beasts. But (b) what ruins this opinion, is the date of the epistle wherein this transaction is mentioned, which was written a year before the sedition that Demetrius occasioned at Ephesus; and therefore others have taken the words in their literal sense, and so asserted, that St Paul was really exposed to wild beasts at Ephesus, but delivered from them by a miracle. And for the support of this, they relate a story out of an apocryphal book of St Paul's travels, frequently mentioned by the ancients, viz. That when Jerome, governor of Ephesus, had condemned the apostle to the wild beasts, at his coming upon the theatre a lion was let loose at him, which came and lay down at his feet, as did several other wild creatures; that at the same time there fell so violent a storm of hail as killed many of the spectators; and that upon the conviction of two such miracles, the governor himself was converted and baptized.

However this be, the silence of the apostolic history can be no just exception to the literal interpretation, since (c) we find our apostle, in his second epistle to the Corinthians, relating certain sufferings, (the same in all probability with his fighting with beasts at Ephesus) (d) "wherein he was pressed above measure, and above strength, despaired of life, and had the sentence of God within him;" and yet we meet with nothing of this in the whole compass of the Acts of the Apostles.

The like is to be said of the thorn in the flesh, and the messenger of Satan, to which St Paul, for his greater humiliation, was submitted, that we have not the least intimation of them in all the sacred history. This only we may learn from the figurative expression, that as (e) the pricking brier, and grieving thorn do, in the prophetic style, denote a sore calamity; so may the expression here signify some sharp affliction sent upon St Paul, to keep his mind humble in the midst of the many revelations which God vouchsafed him. But then the question is, of what kind this affliction was?

Some are of opinion, that this "thorn in the flesh, and messenger of Satan," taking them both for one thing, were (f) the motions of concupiscence, and suggestions of lust, arising frequently in St Paul: But the apostle himself contradicts this interpretation, in telling us, that he had the gift of continence, and that in so high a degree, that he wished all Christians, in this respect, like himself. He was at this time, according to the computation of chronologers, about sixty years old, and therefore it would be a foul slur to so great and holy an apostle to imagine, that he should burn in so frozen an age, which uses to extinguish, or at least to allay, those flames in the most unclean persons. We are told, moreover, that (g) "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man;" and therefore since St Paul acquaints us, that this thorn in the flesh (be it what it will) was (h) given him by God, and that it was one of (i) those infirmities wherein he took pleasure, and chose to glory; as it would have been the greatest impiety for him to have gloried in his impure motions and desires, so we cannot see how the apostle, by confessing such impure motions, could have defended his

(a) 2 Cor. xi. 23, &c.
tations on 2 Cor. i. 10.
tary on 2 Cor. xii. 7.

(b) Calmet's Commentary on 1 Cor. xv. 32.
(d) 2 Cor. i. 8, 9.
(g) James i. 13.

(e) Ezek. xxviii. 24.
(h) 2 Cor. xii. 7.

(c) Whitby's Annotations.
(f) Calmet's Commentary.
(i) Ibid. ver. 9, 10.

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reputation against the attacks of his adversaries, which it is his chief design in the latter part of this epistle more especially to do.

Others therefore observing, that this infirmity in the flesh happened to St Paul, after the visions and revelations whereof he speaks; that it was such an infirmity as obstructed the efficacy of his preaching, and made his ministry less grateful and acceptable to others; and that himself complains of such of the Corinthians, and false apostles among them, as represented his (a) bodily presence weak and mean, and his (b) speech or utterance contemptible, have supposed, that St Paul had some kind of impediment in his speech, which God, at this time, was pleased to send upon him, and which these false apostles (whom he calls the messengers of Satan), to his great sorrow and disconsolation made the subject of their scorn and ridicule.

But, after all, the most general, and indeed the most obvious interpretation is, that it was some bodily disease, very grievous and painful to him, which he aptly calls a thorn, for its sharpness and pungency, and a thorn in the flesh, for the seat of it, which was his body; and this (according to Scripture-phraseology) the apostle calls likewise a messenger of Satan, because all distempers are in Scripture supposed to be the punishments of God, which (as it is represented in Job's case) he permits Satan, as the common executioner on these occasions, to inflict.

It may seem a little too nice, perhaps, to define the particular kind of this disorder; whether it was the gout, the stone, a violent head-ach, or the falling-sickness, as several of the ancients have variously conjectured: But this we know from his own information, that his distemper was visible and manifest to all that conversed with him, such as had an influence over his speech, and was a great disadvantage to him in preaching the Gospel; and therefore he tells the Galatians, (c) "Ye know, how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel to you at first, and my temptation, which was in the flesh, ye despised not, nor rejected;" for (d) "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling," as he tells the Corinthians. (e) From all which it seems to be very plain, that St Paul had some notorious visible infirmity in his body, such as might have exposed him to contempt with those who looked no farther than the outward appearance, and such as God designed for a means to keep him humble.

There is but one obscurity more remarked in the writings of St Paul, viz. concerning the MAN OF SIN, *the Son of Perdition*; and that is a great obscurity indeed. The whole passage runs thus, (f) "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, nor be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand: Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a *falling-away* first, and that MAN OF SIN be revealed, the Son of Perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he is as God, sitting in the temple of God, and shewing himself that he is God:" For the better understanding of which words, we must remember, that St Paul, in his former epistle to the Thessalonians, speaking of the resurrection of the dead, had expressed himself in this manner:—(g) "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we, who are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them who are asleep: For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we, who are alive, and remain, shall be caught up, together with them, in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall ever be with him.—But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need

(a) 2 Cor. x. 10.
(d) 1 Cor. ii. 3.
(g) 1 Thess. iv. 15, &c.

(b) Whitby's Annotations on 2 Cor. xii. 7.
(e) Bishop Bull's Sermons, vol. i.

(c) Gal. iv. 13, 14.
(f) 2 Thess. ii. 1, &c.

that I write unto you ; for yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." From these words, some false teachers, and pretended prophets among them, took occasion to infer, that the day of judgment was at hand ; that it would certainly come while the apostles were yet alive, and before that generation was passed ; which was a doctrine of such dangerous consequence to the peace and tranquillity of mens minds, that the apostle, in this part of his second epistle, sets himself solemnly to refute it. " I beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him ;" where we may observe, that this is the same coming which he had described in his former epistle, by " Christ's descending from heaven with a shout," &c. and the same gathering together which he had specified, by " our being caught up together," with saints newly raised, " in the clouds ;" and that, consequently, all the pains which some writers have taken to shew, that this man of sin is to be interpreted of Simon Magus and the Gnostics, Mahomet and his followers, or the Pope and his clergy, &c. are to be looked upon as indications of their prejudices rather than any discoveries of the truth.

From Acts. i.
10. to the end.

Before the coming of antichrist, we are told that there must be a great falling away, which, though some interpret it of national revolts from the Roman empire, is more properly to be understood of a general defection from the Christian faith ; but as this defection has not yet prevailed, we may adventure to say, that this Son of Perdition is not yet come. The true spirit of Christianity, indeed, in a great measure, is departed from us ; but we are not come yet to make an open renunciation of our Christian profession, which is the apostacy here spoken of. Mahomet was a great oppressor of the Christians, and his successors compelled vast numbers to abjure the name of Jesus ; but neither is he the man of sin here intended, since it is now above eleven hundred years from the time of his first appearing in the world, and yet (a) " all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation," notwithstanding the Scripture ANTI-CHRIST was to precede (and not at so vast a distance to be sure) the coming of our Lord to judgment,

Without concerning ourselves, then, with the many * fabulous accounts which some of the ancients have given us of the origin of Antichrist, the nature of his kingdom, or the manner of his extinction ; we may, in some measure, gather from Scripture—" That, toward the conclusion of the world, some mighty prince or other will arise, a man monstrous for his wickedness and impiety, who, by the power of his arms, will conquer a great part of the world, and, by the violence of his persecutions, cause great defections

(a) 2. Pet. iii. 4.

* To this purpose they tell us, that this Man of Sin, or Antichrist, will be born of a Jewish family, and come out of the tribe of Dan, which, as they imagine, is still subsisting in Babylonia ; that being born in Babylonia, he will there lay the foundations of his empire, and the Jews, mistaking him for their Messiah, will be the first who will declare for him, acknowledge his dominion, and enjoy the chief employments in his government ; that, as soon as he appears, he will begin with attacking the Roman empire, which at that time will be divided among ten powerful kings ; and having subdued Egypt, Ethiopia, and Libya, will then march to Jerusalem, and there fix the seat of his kingdom ; that, having made himself master of the eastern and western empire, he will turn all his thoughts towards the destruction of Christ's kingdom, and the persecution of good men, by which means great numbers will apostatize from the Christian faith, and pay their adoration to him ; that the righteous, under his persecution, will retire

to the Mount of Olives, where they will soon be attacked by this enemy of God ; but, upon their earnest application to heaven for help, God will send Jesus Christ to assist them ; that Christ will descend from heaven, attended by his angels, and preceded by a flame of fire, which nothing will be able to extinguish ; that his angels will give up the army of the wicked into the hands of the righteous, who will make so great a slaughter of them, that their blood shall flow like a torrent in the valley ; and, lastly, that Antichrist will be put to death in his own tent, and upon his own throne, without receiving the least assistance from any ; for to him they apply these words of Daniel, " He shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas, and the glorious holy mountains, yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him," Dan. xi. 45. They who would know more particularly what is said of Antichrist, may consult *Malvendo de Antichristo*, and *Calmet's Dissertation* upon that subject, placed before the Epistle to the Galatians.

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from the Christian faith : That having subdued many kings, and established his religion (which probably will be paganism) in several countries, in time he will come to forget that he is man, and accordingly have his statues erected in places of Divine worship, and the prayers of the people addressed to him as if he were a god : That our Blessed Lord, provoked with his pride and arrogance, will at length bring upon him such a remarkable judgment, as will put a quick period to all his pomp and glory, rescue his servants from his tyranny and infatuation, and ' then shall the end of all things come.

Thus we have endeavoured to clear the character of the apostles in general, and more especially of the great apostle of the Gentiles, from the cavils of the impious and profane ; and to answer the principal objections which, in the history of their acts, and in the course of their epistles, are commonly advanced by those who delight (a) "in vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called." And upon a review of the whole, we may take up the words of St Paul, and say, (b) "If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

DISSERTATION D.

ON THE CONSTITUTION AND DISCIPLINE OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

IN that great plan formed by Divine wisdom for reclaiming man from error, and conducting him from earth to heaven, the church, as we have seen *, has in all ages been of such vast importance, that every reader of the Bible must be desirous of having a more connected account of its rise, constitution, and progress, than our author has given in his answer to the objection, which he puts into the mouth of his infidel, against St Luke's history of the Acts of the Apostles. He has indeed sufficiently proved, that of the primitive church the permanent ministers were of three orders—bishops, priests, and deacons ; but he has not perhaps said enough to satisfy the inquisitive mind, why there were just so many orders and no more.

It has been shown elsewhere *, that the Jewish and Christian churches were both societies founded by Divine authority for the same or similar purposes ; and that the latter is in fact nothing but the former, divested of her typical rites and ordinances, adapted, not to one small territory only, but to the whole world ; that her object is to train mankind to holiness in this life and happiness in another ; and that her Founder nowhere promises to his obedient followers great prosperity in this world, as Moses promised to his, but glory and honour and immortality in heaven, of which the earthly Canaan was but an humble type. As the propagation of true religion, however, has been the ultimate object of both churches, it is reasonable to suppose, that as they had the same origin, the constitution of the second must originally have resembled that of the first as closely as the vast difference between a small kingdom, and the whole world, comprehending many kingdoms, and civil governments of other forms, would admit.

(a) 1 Tim. vi. 20.
of this Book.

(b) 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

* Supplementary Dissertation, &c. Chap. iv.

We have seen, during the course of this Work, that the church of Christ, or kingdom of God and heaven, could not be built, till the Mosaic church was superseded; but our Lord began to lay the foundation of it immediately after his own baptism, by preaching the Gospel, inviting all the Jews to become his disciples, and working miracles to prove the truth of his mission. Of his disciples, after continuing all night in prayer to God, "he chose twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, whom he named apostles (a); and some time afterwards he appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come (b)." That the seventy were subordinate to the twelve, and that they were all subject to their Divine Master, is evident from every text in the Gospels, in which any mention is made of these two orders of ministers; and in this arrangement for laying the foundation of the Christian church, there is a striking resemblance to the means employed for conducting the Israelites to the land of promise.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

"The Israelites were delivered from Egyptian slavery by Moses the *servant* of God; those who were at first converted to the faith, were delivered from a yoke of ordinances, which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear, by Jesus Christ the *Son* of God. The twelve tribes of Israel were conducted, under Moses, through the wilderness, to Canaan, by twelve officers—the heads of their respective tribes: When Christ was laying the foundation of his church, he appointed twelve apostles, to whom he promised, that when he should sit on the throne of his glory, they also should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And to complete the analogy, as the Lord commanded Moses to gather unto him seventy men of the elders of Israel, who, receiving of the spirit that was upon him, should bear the burden of the people with him (c); so Christ appointed the like number of disciples to go before his face to every place whither he himself should come.

"An analogy so striking could not escape the observation of the apostles, after their Divine Master had 'opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures (d),' and perceive the close connection between the Mosaic and Christian dispensations. But if the analogy between what may be called the civil polity of the Israelites in the wilderness, and the subordination established among our Lord's immediate followers, be thus evident, the analogy between the polity of the Jewish church and the same subordination, is surely not less evident.

"In what relates to religion, the disciples could not but perceive that the station of Jesus himself resembled that of the high priest; that the twelve held a place in the little flock similar to that of the priests among the Jews; and that the seventy answered to the Levites in the temple service. The twelve were sent out to preach the Gospel to all the Jews; to baptize (e) the converts to the Christian faith; and, a little before their Master's death, they were authorised to administer the Christian passover, or the rite commemorative of his sacrifice on the cross. To the seventy, no other commission was given than to go before the face of Christ, and prepare the people for his reception; as 'the Levites were given to Aaron and his sons, to wait upon the service of the tabernacle of the congregation (f).' But neither the twelve nor the seventy, nor the whole disciples united, had yet authority to admit a single labourer into their Lord's vineyard, or to expel an individual from the society, of which he was the head (g)."

The church indeed was not yet built (h); but its foundation was laid, and a model exhibited for its future superstructure. Accordingly we find no church mentioned in the New Testament in which there were not three orders of ministers generally distinguished by different denominations. The church of Jerusalem was the mother of them

(a) St Luke vi. 12, 13.

(b) St Luke x. 1.

(c) Numb. xi. 16. and St Luke x. 1.

(d) St Luke xxiv. 45.

(e) St John iv. 1, 2.

(f) Numb. iii. 9. viii. 24.

(g) See Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, Ed. London 1811, App. 1.

(h) St Matth. xvi. 18, 19.

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all; and it is very evident from the station which St James, our Lord's brother, is represented in the Acts of the Apostles, as having, from a very early period, filled in that church, that he really was, what the concurring testimony of all antiquity declares him to have been, the fixed bishop or *angel* of the church of Jerusalem, with many presbyters or elders, and seven deacons, ministering under him. Thus, when St Peter was miraculously delivered from prison, and had been received into the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark (*a*), he said, "Go show these things to JAMES and to the brethren." Why to James in particular, and not to St John, with whom Peter appears to have, from the period of our Lord's resurrection, been on terms of much closer intimacy than with St James? and why were the brethren with *James* rather than with *John*, who, during the life of our Lord, as well as at the first preaching of the apostles after the shedding abroad of the Holy Ghost, had acted a much more conspicuous part than this James? The elders or presbyters were all with *James*, when St Paul, returning from one of his apostolic missions, "went in unto them to declare particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry (*b*)."
Why were the elders all present with *James* rather than with any of the other apostles, of whom it is certain that some were then in Jerusalem? and why did St Paul think it necessary or expedient to give an account of his conduct to *him* in the first place, rather than to any of the other apostles? St Luke informs us, (*c*) that "certain men who came down from Judea to Antioch taught the brethren, and said, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." St Paul, however, speaking of those men, or others, who came to Antioch on a similar mission, says (*d*) that they came from *James*! Did James send them for such a purpose? Certainly not after the council held in Jerusalem on the subject; nor is it likely that Peter, after that council, would have acted such a part as from St Paul's epistle he appears to have done. There is therefore no room for reasonable doubt, but that those disturbers of the brethren at Antioch, mentioned by the apostle and the evangelist, were the very same persons; and yet the former represents them as having come from *James*, whereas the latter only says that they came from *Judea*. Why are certain men, who came down from Judea, said to have come from *James* rather than from the *elders* of the church of Jerusalem, or at least from the other apostles, of whom it appears that they had not then all left Judea?

"If St James was the proper bishop of Jerusalem, with presbyters and deacons ministering under him, all these facts, which on any other supposition are unaccountable, were perfectly natural, and such as were to be expected. For to whom was it so expedient that St Paul should give an account of the things which God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry, as to the bishop and presbyters of the mother-church of the Hebrews? To what individual of the church of Jerusalem should St Peter have sent the earliest account of his miraculous deliverance from prison but to the bishop of that church? And could any thing be more natural than for St Paul to say that certain brethren, who came to Antioch from the church of Judea, came from the chief pastor and governor of that church? This accounts likewise for St James's presiding, and speaking last, in the council of apostles and elders, which met in Jerusalem for determining the question about circumcising the Gentiles; for that he was the *president* of that council is incontrovertible, if any credit be due to the testimony of antiquity; to the unanimous opinion of critics and commentators, (a few members of the modern church of Rome excepted; or, indeed, to the obvious meaning of his words, *Ἀπὸ ἐγὼ κριῶ* (*e*)."

The original church of Jerusalem, therefore, was unquestionably *episcopal* in the

(a) Acts xii. 12—18.

(b) Ibid. xxi, 18—26.

(c) Ibid. xv. 1.

(d) Gal. ii. 11, 12.

(e) See *Whitby* on Acts xv. 19, &c.

diocesan and proper sense of the word ; and there is no ground for doubt but that the same constitution was given to all other churches. The conduct of the apostles and evangelists, in propagating the Gospel through the world, appears to have been this : In the course of their journeyings they fixed their temporary abode, as well in Judea as in every other region of the Roman empire, in cities and populous villages, where alone they could expect audiences to “ the good tidings of great joy, which they were authorised to carry to all people.” In such places they generally remained, if not driven away by persecution, until they had thoroughly brought over to the faith of Christ a few families, which they admitted into the church by baptism ; and from those families they chose one or two of the best informed and most pious men, whom they ordained *presbyters*, or, as our version calls them, *elders*, in every city. To these elders was committed the care of the infant church, by the apostle who had converted its members ; but that it was only a subordinate care that was devolved on them, is evident from the instructions sent by St Paul to the presbyters of the church at Corinth about the incestuous person, whom by his command they had excommunicated, and whom by his command they afterwards restored to communion on his giving to the church sufficient evidence of the sincerity of his repentance (a). At that period the apostle was unquestionably the chief pastor of the church at Corinth, and the presbyters or elders nothing more than what, in modern language, we might call the curates of that church ; and that all the churches, which he had founded, were constituted in the same manner, is plain from his informing the same Corinthians, that upon him “ came daily the care of all the churches.” He did not mean the care of all the churches then in the world, but of those only of which, by first preaching the Gospel among their members, he had laid the foundation ; for that he did not intrude into the province of any other apostle, we have his own testimony, where he says,—(b) “ So have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man’s foundation.”

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

The general tradition of the church indeed is, that the apostles divided among themselves the whole Roman empire—each having a particular province or provinces allotted to him, where he was to preach the Gospel and plant churches ; and this expression of St Paul’s gives a firmer support to that tradition than such traditions generally have. But be this as it may, we may take it for granted, that, in laying the foundations of churches, all the apostles proceeded on the same plan—the plan exhibited to them in the mother-church of Jerusalem ; and as St Paul has given us a fuller and more perspicuous account of his own conduct in the discharge of this most important part of his duty, than we have of the conduct of the other apostles, we may reason from his practice as from the practice of the whole college.

It appears therefore, that for some time each apostle retained in his own hands the government of all the particular churches which he had founded ; and that whilst he was absent from those churches, preaching the Gospel to unconverted Jews and heathens, the presbyters whom he had ordained in each city, governed the church in that city as his vicars ; presided in public worship ; administered the sacraments of baptism, and the Lord’s supper ; and by the directions of the absent apostle, extended the limits of the church beyond the city where they chiefly resided, and in which that church was founded. In that era of persecution, only a comparatively very small number of Christians could assemble under one roof “ for the breaking of bread and prayer ;” and in every large city—such as Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, or Rome, different presbyters conducted the public worship, and administered the sacraments to many little flocks in different houses ; but all, under the superintendence of the one apostle, by whom the Gospel was planted in that city. As soon indeed as a man was found fit to be set over the whole multitude

(a) 1 Cor. v. 1—6 ; and 2 Cor. ii. 5—12.

(b) Rom. xv. 20.

A. M. 4102.
&c. or 5509.
Ann. Dom.
98. &c.

of Christians, as well presbyters as people, in any particular city, and its suburbs *, the apostles, that they might direct their whole attention to the primary object of their mission, divested themselves of the burden of superintending those infant churches, committing the pastoral care of them to such overseers as are, in the New Testament, distinguished by the names of *apostles*, and *angels* of the churches, or as we now call them, *bishops*. Such was *Timothy* to the church of *Ephesus*, *Titus* to that of *Crete*, *Epaphroditus* to that of *Philippi*, though, in our version, he is absurdly called the *messenger* of that church, and such were the angels of the seven churches in the proconsular Asia.

At that early period, no such edifices as our parish-churches, far less as cathedrals, were, or indeed could be, any where built for the accommodation of Christian assemblies. An *apostle*, or *angel*, or *bishop*, as he is now called, resided with a college of presbyters about him, in every considerable city of the Roman empire; to that *angel* or *bishop*, was committed the pastoral care of all the Christians in the city and its suburbs, extending as far on all sides as the jurisdiction of the civil magistrate extended; those Christians could not all assemble under one roof for public worship; and therefore, the bishop or angel, or apostle, sent the different presbyters to administer to the spiritual wants of those, who could not attend on his own ministrations, as well as to preach the faith among the heathen in the neighbourhood; and as converts were made, he visited them himself, both to administer such ordinances, as presbyters were not authorised to administer, and to ascertain whether those his vicars had been faithful to the trust which he had reposed in them.

Such was unquestionably the rise and progress of diocesan episcopacy. No churches were then endowed, nor indeed any where built, except in considerable cities, where there might perhaps be several small oratories. Everywhere else, the people undoubtedly assembled in each others houses, and, as we learn from Scripture, often in the night for fear of their persecuting enemies; but in each of those assemblies care was taken that either the bishop himself, or some of the presbyters should be present, and all the ordinances of religion duly administered. The revenues of the Church were then the free-will offerings of the people, which were all collected into one common stock, and that divided at first into three shares; of which one was allotted for the maintenance of the bishop, another, for that of the inferior clergy, and the third, for the support of the poor. Afterwards, when magnificent churches were built, the common stock was divided into four shares; of which the fourth was collected for the support of the building, and to provide the sacred books, and whatever else was necessary for the celebration of public worship, and the administration of the sacraments.

Hitherto there was no such divisions of the country and its inhabitants, as those which we now call parishes *. Dioceses, or what were equivalent to Dioceses, there were; but the clergy of each diocese lived in some city with their bishop, and were from time to time, sent by him through the diocese to feed the different portions of that flock, of which he was the chief pastor and overseer, and without whose authority

* The *suburbs* of a city anciently comprehended all the towns and villages within a certain district round the city, which, though many of them were distant ten or twelve miles, and often more, were all under the jurisdiction of the city magistrates. *Bingham's Origines Ecclesiasticæ*, book ix. chap. 2.

** It was indeed divided into what were then called *paroixiai*, which has led some people to imagine that a bishop's charge comprehended but one congregation, which assembled for public worship under one roof. But the word *paroixia*, signified not a few houses round a church, but all the towns and villages

round a city which were subjected to the government of the city-magistrates; and as the boundaries of the bishop's pastoral care and jurisdiction were the same with those of the civil jurisdiction of the magistrates, all that district was comprehended within his *paroixia*, or, as we now call it, his *diocese*. Hence the whole cities of *Rome*, *Antioch*, and *Alexandria*, with their respective suburbs, constituted each but one *paroixia*, —even in the end of the third century. *Bingham's Origines*, &c. book ix. chap. ii. and *Euseb. Ecclesiast. Hist. lib. i. chap. i. lib. 2. chap. 24.*

neither the sacraments nor any other rites of the worship, peculiarly Christian, could be regularly celebrated.

From Acts i.
10. to the end.

In this state things continued until the reign of Constantine the Great, and in many countries long after that epoch *. Then indeed churches began to be built in every diocese at convenient distances from each other, for the accommodation of the people; but they were not, at first, supplied, each, by a constantly resident minister. Divine service was performed in them sometimes by one and sometimes by another of the city clergy, sent by the bishop for that purpose; and all those clergymen were supported, as formerly, by their share of the offerings, which still continued to be paid into the common stock of the mother church. At length, emperors and kings, and opulent individuals of different stations, as well as the bishops of the several dioceses, perceiving the benefits that would accrue to the people in the country from having among them a resident minister appointed to each church, thought of endowing those churches, on condition that they and their heirs or successors should have the right of presenting to the churches, thus endowed, clergymen regularly ordained, orthodox in the faith, and ready to pay canonical obedience to the diocesan, to be by him appointed permanent ministers, and subordinate pastors of the different portions of the flock which was equally committed to his care. By this stipulation no encroachment whatever was made on the original rights of the church. The people at large appear not to have ever had, and in the earliest ages could not possibly have, the right of choosing their own spiritual guides; the resident ministers, though no longer maintained on the stock of the mother church, were as much under the jurisdiction of the bishop of the diocese, as the itinerant clergymen, by whom the now endowed churches had been formerly supplied; the bishop retained the same relation to the people that he had before, being still the chief pastor of the whole diocese; and to him the parochial ministers were as accountable for their conduct in feeding his flock, as were the missionaries from the mother church, by whom he had formerly fed them.

The government of the primitive church, before she was anywhere incorporated with the state, was supported by the *spiritual censures* that were passed on her scandalous members; for it is obvious that the church, of herself, has no right to inflict, directly, any *civil punishment* on the greatest sinners. Our Blessed Lord, the Head of the church as a spiritual society, declared in the most solemn manner, that his kingdom is not of this world; and therefore it is indisputable, that the ministers of that kingdom, whether bishops or presbyters, who presume to impose upon any sinner a pecuniary mulct, or to inflict any corporal pains or penalties for any offence whatever, arrogate to themselves an authority which they derive not from their Divine Master.

In churches established by law, the sentence of excommunication is indeed often followed by imprisonment and other civil penalties; and this is as it should be, because such churches are an essential part of the *constitution of the state*, which never has been, nor ever will be, preserved in peace but by the reverence of the people for some system of religion. But though the sentence which produces these effects, is pronounced by an ecclesiastical judge, the civil punishment is inflicted by the authority of the state, with which the church is incorporated. In the days of primitive persecution, which are those of which we are here treating, when the church was wholly governed by herself, the sentences of her bishops or synods on scandalous offenders cast those offenders out of her communion; deprived them of the privilege of uniting in public worship with the faithful; and cut them off wholly from the Christian society; but they *directly* deprived them of no civil privilege, nor of any portion of their liberty or property. *Indirectly* indeed they did; for our Saviour having commanded, that "whosoever would not

* There seems to have been in England no *parishes*, in the present sense of the word, before the year 673 or 680. *Bingham*, book ix. chap. viii.

A. M. 4012.
&c. or 9055.
Ann. Dom.
98, &c.

hear the church, should be unto his disciples as a heathen man and a publican" was to the Jews, excommunicated persons were carefully shunned by all Christians, who never associated with them more closely than the intercourse of civil life rendered unavoidable.

When all Christians were in earnest in their professions of religion, and zeal and true honour glowed in every breast, to be held in universal abhorrence must have been felt as a severe punishment; for even virtuous Jews and Heathens could not esteem such men as had been cut off from the society of Christians for unworthy conduct; and the church being then in reality what we still believe it to be, one catholic and apostolic body, whoever was cut off from one society of Christians, could not take refuge, as now, in a differently constituted sect, but found himself actually cut off from the communion of all, who named with reverence the name of Christ. In exercising this authority, the church cannot be said to have exceeded her powers. She has indeed no right, of herself, to impose fines or inflict any kind of civil punishment for spiritual offences, of which alone it is her inherent right to judge; but surely she has that right which is allowed to every corporation—the right to deprive of her peculiar privileges, such of her own members as refuse to obey her laws and will not listen to her admonitions.

The object, however, of her spiritual censures, is not perhaps universally understood. In the first ages, when men were excommunicated, as they frequently were, for apostacy, and other scandalous sins, they were never restored to her communion, unless sometimes on the bed of death, without being obliged previously to undergo a severe course of penance; but neither the excommunication nor the penance was intended, as some Christians seem to imagine, to serve, the former as a punishment, and the latter as an atonement for sin, but both to operate as instruments towards the reformation of the sinner. The sole atonement for sin is the blood of Christ, which will wash away the deepest stains from the sincere and humble penitent, who has faith to trust in it alone; and it was only to produce humility and penitence in the mind of the sinner, and to serve as a warning to the comparatively innocent, that the most scandalous offender was ever excommunicated. When St Paul delivered to *Satan* the incestuous Corinthian at one time, and Hymeneus and Alexander at another, his purpose was not to doom them to hell-fire, but that the "flesh of the former being destroyed or mortified, his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus," and that the two latter might learn not to blaspheme.

The purpose of all ecclesiastical censures, is to produce reformation; and therefore they are *public* offences only that ought to be *publicly* censured. As uninspired men cannot discern the secrets of the heart, and are therefore unable to judge of the sincerity of any man's professions but from his external conduct, severe courses of penance, of longer or shorter duration, according to circumstances, were, in the primitive church, prescribed to scandalous offenders, before they could be again received into that communion from which they had been expelled. This was done at first, and indeed as long as churchmen retained any just notions of the object of the religion which it was their duty to teach, only that they and the faithful committed to their pastoral care, might have some ground on which to judge of the sincerity of a penitent's professions. It was reasonably supposed, that the man must be in earnest, who, in order to be restored to the communion of the church, submitted cheerfully to all the indignities that were then put upon public penitents; and, as evidences of sincerity, those indignities certainly served a good purpose, but they contributed, of themselves, nothing to the putting away of the penitent's sins. They were evidences to men of that *μετανοια*—that change of heart and mind from profaneness to piety, and from sin to righteousness, which, in our version of the New Testament, is expressed by the word *repentance*, but they were nothing more; and therefore sinners, who had

given no public scandal, however great their private sins might have been, were never, From Acts i. 10. to the end. in those days of purity, subjected to public penance.

Such appears to have been the constitution and discipline of the Christian church during the three first centuries of the Christian era, and it belongs to ecclesiastical history, and not to a work of this nature, to trace her farther. Indeed the History of the Bible proceeds not so far; but the church suffered very little alteration in her external constitution or modes of discipline from the completion of the canon of Scripture until the conversion of the emperor Constantine, when Christianity became the established religion of the empire.]

DISSERTATION V.

OF THE PROFANE HISTORY DURING THIS PERIOD, VIZ. FROM THE BIRTH OF CHRIST TO THE COMPLETION OF THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

SUCH parts of the Jewish history as had any analogy to the things contained in the New Testament, we have already remarked in the Notes annexed to this Work; and what we have farther to do, is * to recite some such principal passages in the Roman history (especially in the lives of the several emperors who lived in the apostolic age), as have any connection with these Sacred Writings.

A. M. 4003,
&c. or 5410.
Ann. Dom. 1,
&c. or 3.

In our last Dissertation of this kind, we left Augustus Cæsar in the very zenith of his power and glory; after the defeat of every rival, in full possession of the Roman empire, and, upon the death of Lepidus, created pontifex maximus, or the high priest of Rome: But, toward the conclusion of his reign, he met with great afflictions from his own family, and especially by his daughter Julia, who being married to his wife's son Tiberius, by her nocturnal revels and adulteries, had made herself infamous in the whole city. The emperor, though a Pagan, had so great a sense, not only of the scandal, but of the immorality likewise of her actions, that he was once resolved to have put her to death; but, upon second consideration, he banished her to a desolate island, called Pandataria, where he prohibited her the use of all sorts of delicacies, and permitted none, without his approved knowledge of their lives and morals, to † approach her. Not long after, her daughter of the same name, who was married to L. Paulus, being convicted of the same crimes, was banished into an island in the Adriatic Sea, called Tremera: And, in the space of a few years, young Agrippa (his only surviving

* In this whole narrative we follow the account which Dr Echard, in his Roman and Ecclesiastical Histories, has given us.

† Some time after this, the people of Rome, whether out of love to the emperor, or respect to his family, earnestly petitioned him to recal his daughter Julia; but he answered them, that "fire and water should sooner meet than they two." Nay, his concern and resentment in this matter were so great, that, when he understood that Phœbe, one of his daughter's confidants, had hanged herself, he protested openly, "That he had rather have been Phœbe's father

than Julia's:" Yet, after five years strict confinement, the people, in a manner, compelled him to allow of her removal from the island into the continent, where she lived till after the emperor's death. But her husband Tiberius had not long obtained the empire, before her annual pensions were stopped, and she, deprived of all hopes or assistance, died in extreme want and misery: An end not unsuitable to one who had so vilely debased herself, and so publicly scandalized the noblest family in the world. *Echard's Roman History in the Life of Augustus.*

A. M. 4018.
&c. or 5425.
Ann. Dom.
&c. or 11.

grandson by his daughter Livia, whom he had lately adopted for his own) by his extravagant life, and irreclaimable vices, became so scandalous to his family, and so odious to the emperor, that he banished him likewise into the island of Planasia; and afterwards, whenever any mention was made of him, or the two Julias (whom he usually called by no other name than his Three Biles, or Imposthumes), he would often, with a profound sigh, say, "Would to heaven I had lived without a wife, or died without children!"

This depravation in his own family, it may well be presumed, was one reason for his making such strict laws against all lewdness and adultery, and concerning marriages and divorces. Great numbers, of the *Equites* more especially, had taken a resolution against marriage, "not out of any kind of virtue or abstinence (as he told them), but from a looseness and wantonness which ought never to be encouraged in any civil government:" And therefore, having highly commended those that were married, and increased the rewards of such as had children, he imposed severe fines upon single persons, in case they did not marry in the space of a year; yet, to shew that he would discourage nothing that had the appearance of virtue, he gave considerable rewards to such women as had vowed perpetual virginity: But, that no public promoter of looseness might escape his censure, he soon after this banished his favourite Ovid, the celebrated poet, into Pontus, for his Amorous Epistles, and his Art of Love, the softness of which was thought capable of enervating and corrupting a larger empire than the Roman.

Augustus, as pontifex maximus, had examined into the books of the Sibylline prophecies (a), as we said before. Those that were genuine, he repositied in the capitol, but the spurious he condemned to the flames: And it is generally supposed, that, upon his perusal of these prophecies, foretelling the appearance of a greater Prince, to whom all the world should pay adoration, he utterly refused the title of LORD, which the people unanimously offered him; and this, by the bye, gave some sanction to the story mentioned by Suidas, viz. that Augustus, sending to the Pythian oracle to enquire, "Who should succeed him?" was answered by the demon, "That an Hebrew child, Lord of the gods, had commanded him to return to hell, and that no further answer was to be expected;" whereupon he erected an altar in the capitol, *Primogenito Dei*, to the "first-born of God."

However this be, it is generally agreed, that in the same year wherein he refused the title of LORD, he appointed Tiberius for his heir, partly through the prevailing solicitations of his wife Livia, and partly from the hopes he had conceived of his virtues outweighing his vices; but at the same time that he did this, he obliged Tiberius to adopt Germanicus, the son of his brother Drusus, a youth of great virtues and surprising excellencies, which soon raised the envy of Tiberius, and not long after his accession to the empire procured the other's ruin.

The last thing which Augustus did, as pontifex maximus, was the regulation of the Roman calendar, which, with us, continues in use to this day, though, in some countries, the alteration which Pope Gregory XIII. made in it, is observed*. At length being near Capua, where he found himself dangerously ill, he sent for Tiberius and his most intimate friends and acquaintance, to whom he recommended many wise and useful things; and being minded to leave the world with the triumphs of a Pagan philo-

(a) Vid. Vol. ii. p. 696.

* [The Gregorian Calendar is merely an improvement of the Julian, and was introduced into all the churches in communion with the see of Rome in the year 1553. Though proceeding on the most incontrovertible principles of science, it was at first rejected by almost all the reformed churches, as it is

by the Greek church at this day; and it was not adopted in Great Britain until A. D. 1751, when, by Act of Parliament, the 3d day of September was enjoined to be reckoned the 14th in that year of confusion. The next year, A. D. 1752, was the first of the *New Style*, as it was called, and began *January 1st*, instead of *March 25*.

sopher, he called for a looking-glass, caused his hair to be combed, and his wrinkled cheeks to be smoothed up, and then, as an actor upon the stage, asked his friends, "Whether he had played his part well?" And upon their answering Yes, he cried Plaudite! and so expired in the embraces of his beloved wife Livia, bidding her remember their marriage and farewell.

A. M. 4018,
&c. or 5425.
Ann. Dom. 14.
&c. or 11.

Thus died the great Augustus, in the 75th year of his age, and 41st of his reign, to the inexpressible grief of all his subjects. He was a person of the highest learning and eloquence, and the most amazing wisdom and sagacity; one who had conquered greater difficulties, met with greater success, completed greater designs, and established a greater empire, than any prince in the universe: and therefore we may less wonder, that, according to the Pagan superstition of those times, after his death, we find temples erected to him, divine honours decreed him, and a large sum of money given by his wife Livia to Numerius Atticus, a senator, for having sworn (as Proculus had formerly done of Romulus) that he saw him ascending into heaven.

The Romans, during the administration of Augustus, had all the happiness of a free people, and were restrained from nothing but those mischiefs which a corrupted liberty produces; but shortly after his death, they met with great alterations, and a quite different treatment from his successor Tiberius, whose only wisdom consisted in a mysterious slyness and suspicion, and his policy in continued artifices and dissimulation.

In the beginning of his reign, however, he made a great show of modesty and affability, and performed many laudable actions towards the reformation of mens lives and manners. He regulated the licentiousness of the theatre; banished the astrologers and magicians from Rome; restrained the delicacies of eating-houses and taverns; severely punished the looseness of young people of either sex; and administered justice with great exactness and diligence; but afterwards giving a loose to his depraved temper and inclinations, he became guilty of all kinds of enormities and oppressions, and proved one of the most subtle and designing tyrants in nature; so that historians have observed of him, that he never spake as he thought, nor shewed any inclination for what he desired; that he looked sullen on his friends, and chearful on his enemies; was fair to those he designed to punish, and severe to those he proposed to pardon; for his standing maxim was, that "a prince's mind should be known to no man:" In short, that he was a most exquisite state juggler, a most jealous and barbarous governor, a debaser of the Roman empire, a corrupter of all that was good, and an introducer of all that was bad and abominable in it.

At his first accession to the empire, he ordered young Agrippa, whom Augustus banished, to be murdered, and then published a report, "That this was done in obedience to the particular order of the late emperor, who had given charge to the centurion that guarded him, to dispatch him, upon the first intelligence of his death;" and having, by the assistance of Piso and his wife Placino, poisoned Germanicus, whose virtues he dreaded, and whose right to the succession, as well as his esteem with the people, might possibly (as he thought) give him some disturbance, he now began to pull off the mask, and to appear more barefaced in his vicious actions, though not so open in his tyrannical designs.

It was a common thing at this time, for governors of provinces to make reports to the emperor of all remarkable events that happened in the places under their jurisdiction; and therefore Pontius Pilate, being now governor of Judea, wrote to Tiberius an account of our Blessed Saviour's passion and resurrection, (which came to pass in the third year of his government) of the miracles which were performed by him, and by others in his name; of the multitude of his followers, which daily increased; and of the opinion which generally prevailed, that he was a God: Whereupon Tiberius made a report of the whole matter to the senate, and proposed to them that Christ might be admitted into the number of their gods. But the senate not liking the motion, and al-

A. M. 4037,
&c. or 5444.
Ann. Dom. 33,
&c. or 31.

ledging an ancient law which gave them alone the superintendence in matters of religion, not only refused to canonize him, but by an edict, commanded, that all Christians should be banished the city ; which, when the emperor understood, he, by another edict, threatened death to any who dared to accuse the Christians, and in all his reign, would not permit, at least not promote, any persecutions against them, which is so much the more wonderful, considering his natural inclination to cruelty.

For, beginning now to act openly, he treated his subjects as enemies, because the vileness of his conduct had given them sufficient occasion to be so. Many of the principal and noblest persons in Rome he condemned, and confiscated their estates upon very light and frivolous pretences ; nor could any man, however virtuous and cautious, account himself safe, because, though he might possibly escape the false reports of spies and informers, yet he had reason nevertheless to stand in fear of the very imagination of the emperor. To retain an innocent remembrance of liberty was interpreted a purpose to re-establish the commonwealth : To testify a concern for the glory of the empire, a secret desire to gain it. To praise Brutus and Cassius was a capital crime. To speak well of Augustus, a dangerous offence. Simplicity of discourse was thought an indication of evil design ; a discreet silence concealed mischievous intention ; Joy was the hopes of the prince's death ; Melancholy, an envying of his prosperity ; and Fear, the just apprehensions of a guilty conscience : So that to speak or to be silent, to be glad or grieved, to be fearful or assured, were all crimes, and very often incurred the most exquisite punishments ; for he generally executed his fury with such extreme severity, that he esteemed it a favour and an act of mercy to put persons to death in an ordinary way.

Thus miserable were the Romans under the arbitrary government of a most outrageous tyrant, till, by his gluttony, drunkenness, and lusts, which raged more violently at an age when nature (one would think) should have cured them, finding his strength impaired, he removed from place to place, and at last settled in a promontory of Misenum ; where, after several consultations with his favourite Macro, he named Caius Caligula, the only surviving son of Germanicus, together with a young grandson of his, called Tiberius, to be his successors ; and it is probably conjectured, that he named the former in hopes that his vices would efface the memory of his own wickedness, and his known cruelty extinguish the whole Roman nobility ; for which reason he was frequently heard to say, " that in Caligula he had brought up a serpent for the people of Rome, and a phaeton for all the rest of the world."

During his illness his spirit sensibly declined ; but his dissimulation was as strong as ever in carrying on the humour of his former luxury and debaucheries, and in despising all physic, till his weakness was discovered by Charides, a famous physician, who, under pretence of kissing his hand, felt the defect in his pulse. This the crafty prince immediately perceiving, shortly after dissembled such faintings, as made all the company think him dead, and begin to make their court to the new emperor ; but as he recovered again, to the great surprise and almost confusion of Caligula and Macro, they soon found means to dispatch him, in the 78th year of his age, and the 23d of his reign, either by poison or smothering him in the bed-clothes, to the no small joy and satisfaction of all the senate and people of Rome.

Caius, who was surnamed Caligula, from his wearing the military buskin, called Caliga, in his youth, began his reign with all the clemency and regularity imaginable. He caused the famous models and institutions of Augustus, which had been disused by Tiberius, to be revived. He began to reform many abuses in the state, and severely punished corrupt governors, of whom he banished Pontius Pilate to Vienne in Gaul, where he afterwards killed himself. He took a strict view of the *Equites*, and put all such to public shame as were guilty of any infamous crime. He punished with death the *Spintriæ*, those abominable inventors of unnatural pollutions, whom his predecessor

greatly encouraged: He remitted several impositions invented by Tiberius, and was so popular, that he endeavoured to restore the ancient method of electing magistrates by the suffrages of the people.

A. M. 4044,
&c. or 5451.
Ann. Dom.
40, &c.

But, in a short time, all these promising qualities vanished: His care for the public was laid aside; and, by giving a full loose to his furious passions, he soon became such a monster, in all manner of wickedness, as the world never heard of before. He was so proud, that he impiously assumed divine honours, and had a temple dedicated to his own divinity; so prodigal, that he consumed above fifty millions of our money in a few months time; so brutish, that he committed incest with all his three sisters, and suffered no lady of distinction to escape his lust; and so tyrannical, that he wished the Roman people had but one neck, that he might dispatch them all at one blow. In short, he was so superlatively wicked, as to occasion this reflection of Seneca, viz. "That nature seemed to have brought him forth on purpose to shew what was possible to be produced from the greatest viciousness, supported by the greatest authority."

His assuming the title of *Optimus Maximus*, with other epithets of honour, which the Romans gave only to their great god Jupiter; and, because he would be reputed a real Jupiter, his inventions to imitate thunder and lightning; his instituting a set of priests to officiate in his temple, who daily sacrificed peacocks, pheasants, and the most rare and delicate fowls that could be procured; and, what is more, his becoming a priest himself, and admitting his wife and his horse to be fellow priests with him; his falling in love with the moon, and, as if she had been a fine lady, inviting her to his bed, to taste of the pleasures of his embraces; and his deifying his sister Drusilla after her death, and making her a goddess, whom, all his life long, he had made his harlot; his barbarous cruelty, as well as impious love to those of his own family; his using his grandmother Antonia so inhumanly, that she poisoned herself; murdering his co-heir Tiberius, merely for using a sweet powder; and almost all his own kindred, except his uncle Claudius, whom he preserved only for a laughing-stock; his condemning persons of the best rank and quality to dig in the mines, or to repair the highways; his casting great numbers of old infirm men, and poor decrepid house-keepers, to the wild beasts, to rid the state of such unprofitable members, and his causing all public granaries to be shut up, that such as escaped the wild beasts might perish by famine; his ordering large pillars and towers to be built in the bottom of the sea; mountains to be levelled, plains and valleys to be elevated, and * a wonderful bridge, of above three miles and

* To shew his power and greatness, and that he was able to walk upon the sea as well as the land, he ordered an infinite number of ships to be secured in all parts, and many others to be new built, and all to be brought into the bays of Baïæ and Puteoli, in Campania, about 90 miles from Rome. These ships being placed in two rows, in the form of a crescent, were fastened and moored together with anchors, chains, and cables, to make them firm and secure; and over these were laid vast quantities of large planks and boards, covered over with so much earth as made it look like firm ground, or one of the streets of Rome. For upon this bridge he built houses and lodgings for the reception of himself and his followers, and by pipes conveyed fresh water from the land, to serve the occasions of his revels. When this was done, he and all his court, with prodigious throngs of all sorts of people, repaired thither, where, after some solemn sacrifices to the gods, he, proudly adorned with stately robes of gold and pearl, sitting on horseback, with a civic crown, and Alexander's breastplate, accompanied with the great officers of his army, and all the nobility and gentry of Rome entered at

one end of the bridge, and, with an awful majesty, rode to the other. After this, lodging all night upon the bridge, he caused such an infinite number of torches, lanthorns, and other lights to be placed on all parts of the work, as gave him occasion to boast, "That he had turned the night into day, as well as the sea into land." The next day he rode over the bridge in his triumphant chariot, with Darius, an hostage of Parthia, attending, and followed by a mighty train of other chariots, and all his soldiers in bright armour; which when he had done, he ascended a rostrum, and there made a solemn oration in praise of his own great attempt; and (that he might perform something more memorable before he left the bridge) he ordered great numbers of the multitude to be cast into the sea; and when they laid hold on rudders, or any thing that might save their lives, commanded them to be thrust off, so that they all perished without remedy: after which, he returned home in a magnificent manner, for having surmounted (as he thought) the very order and laws of nature, *Eachard's Roman History, in the Life of Caligula.*

A. M. 4044,
&c. or 5451.
Ann. Dom.
40, &c.

an half in length, to be carried from the point of Baïæ to the opposite shore of Puteoli ; and, above all, his famous expedition into Batavia, or Holland, where he enriched his army with the spoils of the conquered ocean, as he called them ; i. e. with cockle-shells and muscle-shells, which he ordered them to gather in their helmets, and, after having made a pompous oration to them, (wherein he extolled their noble achievements upon this occasion) his causing a lofty town to be erected on the sea-side in memory of this great victory ; these, and a thousand more vile extravagances, and monstrous cruelties, recorded at large in the histories of his life, made him so very odious and contemptible to his subjects, that many began to conspire against him, but all ineffectually, until Cassius Chæreas, an officer of his guards, resolved upon it ; and having communicated his design to several senators, Equites, and others, waited only for a fit opportunity to put it in execution.

Belonging to the palace there was a private gallery, through which the emperor usually passed to some baths, not far distant. Here Chæreas, with his associates, met him, and, after some short salutation, gave him a mortal stab, crying out, Tyrant, think upon this ; at which instant the rest of the conspirators rushed in, and gave him no less than thirty wounds before they had dispatched him.

Thus died Caius Caligula, in the 29th year of his age, and the fourth of his reign, by his prodigious enormities having justly pulled down the vengeance of heaven upon himself and his family ; for (that his whole race might be extinguished) his wife Cæsonia was at the same time stabbed by a centurion, and his only daughter, then an infant in the cradle, had her brains dashed out against a wall ; and that, if possible, both his name and features might be forgot in future ages, his money, by a decree of the senate, was melted down.

Upon the death of Caligula, the city was much divided. The nobility were for restoring the Roman liberty, the commons for electing a new emperor, and the army joined with the commons ; but who to nominate to this dignity they were at a loss, till some of the soldiers searching about for plunder in the palace, chanced to espy Caligula's uncle Claudius hid in an hole, for fear of his life, whom they brought into the camp, and instantly proclaimed emperor. The senate hearing of this, sent a tribune of the people to advise him to submit to their establishment, and not disturb the public peace with his pretensions ; but at the instigation of Herod Agrippa, king of Judea, who was then at Rome, he refused to comply, and in a few days, by the clamours of the people, and menaces of the soldiers, the senate was so wrought upon, that considering him as nearer allied to the empire than any other, (being both uncle to Caligula, and brother to Germanicus) they agreed to make him emperor, and shortly after confirmed that title to him.

Claudius was now in the fiftieth year of his age ; but either upon account of his bodily distempers, or the natural stupidity of his mind, he was ever till this time judged incapable of any public office in the state ; however, by the good acts which he did in the beginning of his reign, it seemed as if he had cured the infirmities of his body, and in some measure corrected those of his understanding too. He disannulled the cruel edicts made by Caligula, and commanded all who were unjustly confined, either in prison or banishment, to be set at liberty. In his honours and titles he shewed himself modest and temperate, and upon severe penalties, forbad all persons to sacrifice to him, as they had done to Caligula. To his enemies, and the opposers of his election, he shewed himself merciful, and passed a general act of indemnity for all past crimes ; only for a public example, and to terrify others from the like attempt, he ordered Chæreas, and some other conspirators (who died all with great resolution) to be executed. He took more than ordinary care, that the city of Rome should be continually furnished with all sorts of corn and provisions, by securing the merchants against the pirates at sea ; and that it might want no supply of water, he made a famous conduit, or aque-

duct, called after his own name, which, both for stateliness of workmanship, and the plenty of water it conveyed, at forty miles distance through great mountains, and over stately arches in valleys, far surpassed any work of that kind in all Italy.

But it was not long before this emperor begun to lessen his care and concern for the public, and to give himself up to his gluttonous disposition and passive stupidity; so that his freed-men and favourites, (together with his libidinous wife, Messalina) imposing upon him as they thought fit, became the most intolerable oppressors and tyrants; inflicting innumerable deaths and other cruelties; selling governments and dignities; and issuing out pardons and penalties, without his knowledge. The truth is, he was so cowardly and fearful, that when a rebel, named Camillus, commanded him by letter to resign his empire, he was in a disposition to have done it; so blind and incogitant, that his empress Messalina married herself to another man in his life time, and almost in his presence; so stupid, that when the news of her execution was brought him, he shewed not the least token of joy, sorrow, or any other human passion or affection; and so prodigiously forgetful, that he frequently asked, and sent for such persons as he had executed the day before.

After the death of the infamous Messalina, the emperor married his own niece Agrippina, a woman of a vast spirit and unbounded ambition, who soon prevailed with her husband, even to the prejudice of his own son Britannicus, to adopt her son Domitian, under the name of Claudius Nero, and to confer on her the title of Augusta. Upon her advancement to this dignity, it was not long before she procured the deaths of several ladies of the highest rank, who had been her rivals in marrying the emperor, and became so very zealous for her son's succeeding in the empire, that when she was told by some oracle, or augur, that "her son should be emperor indeed, but would certainly be the cause of her death," her answer was, "let him, so he does but reign."

In a few years, however, the exorbitant power which she assumed gained her the envy and hatred of the emperor's favourites, and the disesteem of Claudius himself, who, notwithstanding his strange insensibility, began now to repent of his marriage with her, and the adoption of her son. This Agrippina soon discovered by his unusual favours to his son Britannicus, and by what accidentally dropt from him, when heated with wine, viz. "That he had been very unfortunate in his wives, but that none of them had escaped unpunished." Whereupon she determined with herself to procure his death by poison; but what kind of poison to make choice of was the question. A strong poison she thought might make her villany too apparent, and a slow one might give the emperor opportunity of discovering so much of her practices, as to prevent her son's succession; and therefore she resolved upon such a potion as would distract his senses, and not too suddenly end his life. For this she wanted not her assistants, who infused the poison into some mushrooms, a dish which the emperor loved beyond measure; but finding that this only made him sick, she sent for her own physician, named Xenophon, who, under the pretence of making him vomit, (as his custom was to do after his gluttonous debauches) thrust a poisonous feather down his throat, which in a short time ended his life, in the 64th year of his age, and the 14th of his reign.

As soon as Claudius was dead, Agrippina, as one overwhelmed with extremity of grief, embraced Britannicus in her arms, calling him the dear image of his father's face, and, by many artifices, detained him and his two sisters, Antonia and Octavia, in the chamber, placing a strong guard at every door and passage till all things were made ready for her son's advancement; and then the palace gates being suddenly set open, Nero, accompanied with Burrhus, prefect of the Prætorian guards, went out to the cohort then in waiting, who, at the command of Burrhus, received him with loud acclamations (though not without some enquiries after Britannicus), and carried him in a chariot to the rest of the troops, and they, upon his promise of a donative, according to the exam-

A. M. 4044,
&c. or 5151.
Ann. Dom.
40, .c.

A. M. 4058,
&c. or 5465.
Ann. Dom.
54, &c.

ple of his predecessors, saluted him emperor ; which was shortly confirmed by the senate, and acknowledged by the provinces.

Nero, though but seventeen years of age, began his reign with the general joy and satisfaction of the city ; for, promising to govern according to the wise rules and institutions of the great Augustus, he at first, both in words and actions, shewed himself just, liberal, and merciful. He conferred favours, and distributed large sums of money among the people, and Prætorian soldiers. He moderated the impositions and tributes of the provinces ; assigned pensions to decayed senators ; used all men with such humanity and courtesy, and, in the execution of justice, shewed such clemency and pity, that it seemed as if heaven had sent the Romans such a prince as they desired ; as indeed, for the first five years of his government, it was so good, in all respects, that the famous emperor Trajan was afterwards wont to say, that “ for that space of time all governments came short of this :” But this, in a great measure, is to be imputed to the wise conduct of Burrhus and Seneca, who were the young emperor’s guides and governors, in equal authority, and bearing equal share in their different faculties ; Burrhus, in military discipline and gravity of manners ; and Seneca, in precepts of eloquence and courteous demeanour.

As Nero encreased in years, so his vices and extravagancies became more conspicuous : For, having poisoned his * predecessor’s son, Britannicus, taken Pappæa Sabina from the bed of her husband Otho, first divorced his wife Octavia, and afterwards put her to death, murdered his † mother Agrippina, and (as some imagine) poisoned his governor Burrhus, he thought himself now free from all restraint. He therefore gave the reins to his brutal appetites, and abandoned himself to all kinds of extravagancies and vices, such as were never practised by a prince, and scarce conceived by any man. His running about the city by night, disguised in the habit of a slave, with his lewd companions, entering taverns and infamous houses, and there committing what outrages he thought fit ; his debasing himself so far as to become a common singer, musician, and stage-player, frequently acting a part before the whole city, and procuring great numbers of noblemen and ladies to be present when he acted ; his professing the art of a charioteer, taking a journey as far as Peloponnesus, on purpose to run in the Olympic games, and, at his return to Rome, entering the city in triumph, surrounded with musicians and players, brought from all parts of the world :—These were excusable follies, in comparison to the monstrous extravagancies which he afterwards fell into, when, having attired himself in the habit of a woman and a bride, he was first wedded to one of his abominable companions, named Pythagoras, and after that became an husband to a boy, called Sporus, whom he first emasculated, and then clothing him with all the ornaments of an empress, accompanied him in all the most public places.

* The occasion of Nero’s doing this, is said to be some furious menaces his mother Agrippina made him, which put him in great fear of a competitor, at least, if not of the loss of his empire ; and therefore, to free himself from all jealousies, he ordered a poison for Britannicus ; but this proving ineffectual, he had recourse to a stronger, which was cunningly administered to the young prince in a public banquet, and so suddenly spread through his veins, that at once his speech and his spirits forsook him. While the spectators were all amazed, Nero, leaning unconcernedly on the table, assured the company, “ That it was usual for him to be seized with such epileptic fits, so that they need not doubt his recovery ;” whereupon the rest, for different ends and purposes, dissembled their griefs, and, after some silence, the mirth of the banquet began again : But Britannicus in the mean time

died, and was privately buried that same night. *Echard’s Roman History in the Life of Nero.*

† After that Nero was resolved upon his mother’s death, he attempted first to poison her ; but by reason of the antidotes and preservatives which she took, poison proved ineffectual. Then he endeavoured to drown her ; but she having the good luck to escape, even when several of her company perished, he at last caused a report to be spread, that she had conspired to take away his life, and so sent certain tribunes to murder her : and authors generally say, that upon their approaching and unsheathing their swords, she shewed them her belly, crying, “ Strike me here, since this part hath deserved it, for having conceived and brought forth such a monster as Nero ;” and immediately expired with the wounds she received. *Echard’s Roman History, in the Life of Nero.*

Nor was his cruelty less exorbitant than his lust: For, upon the discovery of a conspiracy, which Caius Piso and some other great men had formed against him, he put vast numbers to death, noble and ignoble, guilty and innocent, among whom (besides Piso, the head of the conspiracy) died Lucan, the famous poet, who hated Nero for his forbidding him to publish his verses; Seneca *, the philosopher, and tutor to the tyrant, who, though not convicted of any treason, was commanded to die; and the polite but † impure Petronius, who had been a great assistant to Nero in his extravagant pleasures. Nay, so sanguinary was he in his temper, that, without any manner of provocation, he put many eminent persons to death, as Rubellius Plautus, only for being of the Julian family, and another, named Pallas, merely for being rich; a crime for which many suffered in those days! And, to complete all his wickedness, having set the city of Rome on fire, which with infinite satisfaction he beheld, and sung all the while "the destruction of Troy" in derision, he nevertheless, out of hatred to the Christians, accused them of the fact, and thereupon proceeded against them as incendiaries, raised the first general persecution, and put great numbers of them to the most exquisitely cruel and ignominious deaths.

These, and many more bloody and tyrannical proceedings, had by this time worn out the patience of the Romans, and made all men press for a revolution. Vindex, commander of the legions in Gaul, was the first who began the revolt. He publicly protested against the government of Nero, and proclaimed Sergius Galba, who at that time was governor of part of Spain, emperor. *2 Galba, joining in the enterprise, and taking the empire upon him, procured the revolt, not only of the armies in Spain, but of the legions in Germany, and several other places, who unanimously declared against the present emperor.

These proceedings drove Nero to the utmost rage and despair, and put him upon a design, the blackest and most barbarous that ever man imagined. He resolved to massacre all the governors of provinces, and commanders of armies, under the pretence of conspiracies; to destroy all exiled persons, lest they should join with the revolters; to murder all the Gauls in Rome, as favourers of their countrymen; to poison the whole senate at an entertainment; to burn the city again, and to turn out wild beasts among the people, to prevent their extinguishing the flames: But he found himself unable to effect these designs. All mankind fell from him, and forsook him; which made him become as servile as before he was tyrannical. Nay, the senate having met together, pronounced him a mortal enemy to the state, and solemnly condemned him to die *more majorum*, which was to have his body stripped naked, his head made fast in a pillory,

* He being commanded to die, cheerfully undertook it; but was obliged to seek death several ways; for he had so macerated himself with abstinence, that he could not bleed, and poison would have no operation upon him: But at length, entering a bath, he was stifled with the fumes, discoursing even to the last, according to his usual eloquence, of the most excellent things, which being taken from his mouth, were afterwards published. Such was the death of the great philosopher Seneca, which some have thought a just judgment upon him, for living so contrary to his writings, and for educating his pupil no better. *Echard's Roman History in the Life of Nero.*

† His death was the most remarkable in the world, and most resembling the whole course of his life. In it he proceeded with all imaginable unconcern, opening his veins, and closing them as he thought fit, discoursing with his friends, not of serious matters or the immortality of the soul, but of light and pleasant things, and all the time attending to soft verses and

delicate love songs. *Echard, ibid.*

*2 There is something so lively in some part of the speech which Galba made to his army upon this occasion, that it is well worthy our observation.—"It grieves me to say, but it hinders not every man from seeing, that no slave, under the severest master, ever endured a year of harder service than we have so many under Nero. What kind of exaction has he not used to supply with extortion what he hath spent with shame? What kind of cruelty has he not practised? How has he wallowed in the blood of his father, his brother, his mother, his wife, his master, and all who are valiant and virtuous in the senate, city, or provinces, without any distinction of age or sex? All which cry for vengeance upon such a prince: A prince! No, an incendiary, a singer, a fiddler, a player, a carter, a cryer: No prince, nay, no man, having a man to his husband, and a man to his wife; but a monster of mankind!" *Echard, ibid.*

A. M. 4058.
&c. or 5465.
Ann. Dom.
54. &c.

A. M. 4072.
&c. of 5479.
Ann. Rom.
68. &c.

and so to be scourged to death. When Nero understood this, he snatched up two daggers, and, after many inglorious sighs and tears, and some whining complaints, "what a rare artist the world in him would lose," by the assistance of Epaphroditus, his secretary, he wounded himself so, that he died shortly after, in the thirty-second year of his age, and fourteenth of his reign.

The death of Nero occasioned an universal joy and satisfaction in Rome; and, as Galba was esteemed a person of great wisdom and valour, and had been elected by the two armies in Gaul and Spain, the people unanimously agreed, and the senate, in a short time, consented to create him emperor, though he had no affinity or alliance with the family of the Cæsars, either by blood or adoption.

Galba was seventy-two years old when he first undertook the government, under the name of the Lieutenant of the Senate and People of Rome; but, when he received advice that Nero was dead, and the people had sworn allegiance to him, he laid aside the name of lieutenant, and, assuming the title of Cæsar, put himself upon his way to Rome. In the mean time several rumours were spread abroad both of his avarice and cruelty; of his severe treating the cities of Spain and Gaul, which scrupled at first to declare for him; of his oppressing them with excessive tributes, demolishing their fortifications, executing their governors, and even not sparing their wives and children, which made the people begin to shew less satisfaction for his arrival than they did for his election.

At his first coming to Rome, his severity to those seamen and mariners whom Nero had listed among his legionary soldiers; his discharging the Roman cohorts which had been established by former emperors; his refusing to pay the donative that in his absence was promised to the Prætorian bands; and, shortly after, cashiering several of them upon a bare suspicion of correspondence and confederacy with Nymphidius, captain of the guards; these, and several other arbitrary proceedings, procured him many enemies, especially among the military people: Though his rescinding the odious acts of Nero, recalling those whom he had unjustly banished, and executing several of the wicked instruments of his cruelty, were very grateful actions to the Romans in general, had he not spared some of the most notorious offenders for the sake of money.

The love of money indeed was his governing passion, and had got so absolute a possession of him, that he was often observed to sigh and weep when he saw his table a little better furnished than ordinary: But that which made this emperor most generally detested, was his suffering himself to be entirely managed by three favourites, who, having their lodgings with him in the palace, and being perpetually in his presence, were commonly styled his three pedagogues. They were persons of as different humours and vices as possible; and accordingly, by the abuse of his authority, made him appear, in the inequality of his conduct, both odious and despicable; so that sometimes he shewed himself severe and rigorous, at other times remiss and negligent, condemning some illustrious persons unheard, pardoning others without reason, and permitting every thing either to be purchased by money, or granted for favour, just as he was guided by these men.

During this misconduct at Rome, affairs in the provinces were in a worse condition. For since the army in Spain had presumed to choose an emperor without any other authority, many mutinies were raised, and factions sprang up in most parts of the empire, through envy, discontent, or a desire of alteration; so that the emperor, perceiving that, besides his unwieldy old age, which made him contemptible, he was less respected by many for want of an heir, was resolved to adopt some person of such an age and authority, as, in his lifetime, might be able to protect him, and after his decease succeed him in the empire. Upon his declaring this his intent, his three favourites were very busy in recommending persons to him; but Otho having gained the chief favourite Vanius, together with the Urban and Prætorian cohorts, assured himself of success.

Galba, however, resolving to consider the public good, and disliking Otho's irregular life, as too much resembling that of his master Nero, rejected him, and made choice of a young man called Piso, in whom was an happy concurrence of all the good qualities that were necessary in a prince and emperor.

Otho finding the hopes of his adoption thus blasted, immediately applied himself to the soldiers, with whom he had a powerful interest, and by his plausible speeches and large promises, engaged them to proclaim him emperor, in opposition to Galba's choice; which when Galba understood, he was both disheartened and confounded. Some were of opinion that he ought to put himself in arms and appear in public, that his presence might stem the torrent of this dangerous faction; others, that his greatest security would be to fortify himself in the capitol, and there to attend the result of the disorder. But while he continued thus wavering and irresolute, a false report was brought him that Otho was slain; whereupon he rode armed out of his palace, with his guards and many followers into the grand Forum; and at the same time there entered, at the other side, a strong body of horse from the camp, sent by Otho to dispatch him. Upon their nearer approach, for a considerable while they stood amazed and in a dubious posture, as apprehending the consequence of their fatal commission; so that Galba had time enough to make his escape, but by his irresolution lost his opportunity. For while he was considering with himself whether to return to the palace or retire to the capitol, he was suddenly abandoned by the chief of his followers, insomuch, that when the soldiers sent by Otho came up to him, he stretched out his neck and bad them strike it off, if it were for the good of the commonwealth and the Roman people; which accordingly was done in the seventy-third year of his age, after a short reign of seven months; and after him were executed his three favourites, and his adopted son Piso.

On the same day that Galba was murdered in the Forum, the senate and the people of Rome all acknowledged Otho for his successor; a person valiant and witty, of an ancient and honourable family, and a great favourite to Nero: but more for the conformity of his humours and vices, and the beauty of his wife Poppæa, than any worthy execution of the many considerable offices wherewith he was intrusted. However, when he came to the government, he ordered all things agreeably to the honour of the empire, which, together with his pardoning Marius Celsus, who had been advanced by Galba, and strenuously opposed his succession; his punishing of Tigellinus, who had been Nero's chief instrument in impurity; and his generous restoring the goods and estates of such as had been exiled by that tyrant, gained him the love and affection of the people of Rome.

Vitellius, at this time, commanded the legions in the Lower Germany. He was a person of great reputation and authority, by reason of the several offices and magistracies which he had held in Rome and elsewhere, under the three emperors Caligula, Claudius, and Nero, with each of whom he had been very intimate, but more for his excessive vices and some personal abilities, than any virtues or excellencies in him. He was in favour with Claudius, for his gaming at dice; with Caligula, for his dexterity in managing a chariot; and with Nero, for the same skill, and some other such-like qualities; but notwithstanding this, being a man of subtlety and intrigue, he had, by large gifts and specious promises, procured the army to create him emperor, without attending the will and pleasure of the senate, about 13 days before Galba's death.

When the news of this came to Rome, it put Otho into a great consternation, and the city into no small concern, as well knowing that nothing but the sword and the blood of many thousand Romans could determine the contest. The fears and cares of the city were farther augmented by the great preparations they saw Otho making, and the known disabilities of the nobility and gentry in martial affairs. The chief of the senate were grown old and impotent, wanting both the power and vigour of soldiers. The nobility were slothful, covered with the rust of a long peace, and unaccustomed

A. M. 4072,
&c. or 5479.
Ann. Dom.
68, &c.

A. M. 4073,
&c. or 5480.
Ann. Dom.
69, &c.

to the fatigues of a camp. The Equites were dissolved in ease and luxury, and ignorant in military service, which the more they endeavoured to conceal, the more they betrayed their fears. The wiser sort began to shew great concern at the miseries and perturbations of the commonwealth; but the inconsiderate were swelled with vain hopes and extravagant opinions, and many persons, bankrupts in peace, in these troublesome times, began to make the greatest appearance, as being themselves most in safety when the state was in greatest danger.

While things were in this situation at Rome, Otho received advice that Vitellius's forces were upon their march towards Italy, under the conduct of two commanders, Valens and Cæcinna; whereupon he departed from Rome with a fair army, consisting of the Roman nobility, the prætorian cohorts, the legions out of the fleets upon the Italian coasts, and such others as he could levy in that time. Upon the approach of the two armies, both parties proceeded with such haste and precipitation, that, besides skirmishes and other encounters, three considerable battles were fought, one at Placentia, another at Cremona, and a third at a place called Castor, in all which Otho and the senate had the advantage, though the word on both sides was, "Rome and the empire!"

Valens and Cæcinna had hitherto acted separately, but joining now all their forces together, they came to a general battle near Behriacum, a village between Cremona and Verona, and, after a sharp engagement, the prætorian cohorts giving way, the Vitellians obtained a victory, which at once decided the contest. For Otho, though he had sufficient encouragement to continue the war, being reduced to a sort of desperation, resolved upon an attempt, contrary to his soft and effeminate temper, which was "to die himself, in order to spare the blood of his countrymen." No arguments or entreaties could move or divert him from this resolution, which he carried on and effected with all imaginable calmness and serenity of mind.

For the night before he died, having chosen out a sharp dagger, and laid it under his pillow, he took a draught of cold water, and so went to bed and fell into a profound sleep; but awaking about break of day, and seeing one of his servants in the chamber, he commanded him to retire, and then taking the dagger, gave himself a mortal stab on the left side, and, with a single groan, ended his life, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, and after a very short and troublesome reign of only twelve weeks and six days.

Soon after the death of Otho, Vitellius, being still in Gaul, was both by the army and senate acknowledged for emperor. In his journey towards Rome, arriving at Behriacum, where the last battle was fought, he was extremely delighted with the sight of the putrified bodies, and the limbs of men and horses mangled and scattered abroad; and when several of his train complained of the noisome smells, he impiously replied, That "a dead enemy smelled well, but a dead citizen better." Nor did he give

* His speech to his soldiers, upon this occasion, is very remarkable,—“I esteem this day as far more happy and glorious than that whereon you made me emperor, since it has manifested such sensible tokens of your love and affection, and so incontestable proofs of your duty and loyalty; therefore I beseech you not to deny me this favour, which is to suffer me to die justly and honourably for the safety of so many brave soldiers, and worthy citizens as you are. There can be no occasion for any legions and forces coming to my assistance, since the enemy is neither Hannibal nor Pyrrhus; therefore to hazard your virtue and valour in dangers wholly needless, is too dear a purchase of life, and the greater hopes you have of success, the more honourable will be my death,

as being voluntary, and not by any constraint. Assure yourselves I had rather die than reign emperor, since I can never so far advance the Roman state by wars and bloodshed, as by sacrificing myself for the peace of it; and whereas others have purchased fame and glory by their well-governing and supporting the empire, I may reasonably expect a name for leaving it, rather than permit my ambition to weaken and destroy it. I therefore desire that you would take this as an undoubted proof of my courage and resolution, that I make no complaints of hard fortune, or ill success; for to blame either gods or men, implies a mean and indirect desire of living.” *Echard's Roman History, in the life of Otho.*

greater satisfaction at his arrival in Rome ; for, like a conqueror, he entered the city mounted upon a noble steed, and adorned with all his military habiliments ; encouraged his soldiers to all kinds of insolence and outrage ; and abandoned himself to the most extravagant degrees of luxury, gluttony, and cruelty, insomuch that, in four months time, he wasted above seven millions of our money ; nor would the revenues of the whole empire, had he reigned long, have been sufficient to maintain his expences. His using all manner of fraud and hypocrisy to destroy such persons of quality as had formerly been his associates and school fellows ; his going to visit one of them in a fever, and upon his desiring to drink, mingling poison with the water, and delivering it to him with his own hand ; his causing all persons to be put to death that came to demand the payment of his former debts, and one of them to be slain in his very presence, that he " might feed his eyes with the spectacle," as he called it ; his ordering two sons to be executed with their father, for no other crime than merely presuming to intercede for his life ; and his having several of the meaner sort slaughtered, only for deriding the colours of some charioteers whom he pretended to favour ; these, and many more sanguinary acts, mentioned by the historians who have recorded his life, are a sufficient indication, that in his government he designed to follow the example of Nero, to whose manes he publicly sacrificed in a general assembly of the priests in the Campus Martius. All this while he gave himself up to such a strange carelessness and stupidity, that nothing but his horrid cruelties could put him in mind of his exalted state ; and fortifying himself with confused mirth and sottishness against all dangers and exigences, he almost lost the remembrance of things past, and the thoughts of things to come.

Having thus, by this abominable life, made himself odious to the city, and by the daily insolences and cruelties of his soldiers insupportable to the country, the legions in the east (though in the beginning of his reign they submitted to his authority) began now to revolt, and fixing their eyes upon Vespasian, as a person most worthy of the highest authority, and most able to put an end to the miseries of his country, resolved to create him emperor against Vitellius. Vespasian at this time was engaged in a war against the Jews, and with great bravery and renown had reduced most of their country, except Jerusalem ; but when his army proclaimed him emperor, and he absolutely refused that dignity, the soldiers with their drawn swords, and many menaces against his life, compelled him to take the honour upon him ; whereupon all the armies of the east came to his service and obedience, and in a general council it was determined that Titus should continue the war against the Jews, Mutianus enter Italy with the greatest part of the legions, and Vespasian himself go to Alexandria, to make provision from all parts, and thence pass over into Italy, to join Mutianus, as occasion should require it.

In the mean time, Antonius Primus, an excellent soldier, who had been banished by Nero, but restored by Galba, a friend to Vespasian, and privy to his design, immediately marched at the head of the Mælian legions into Italy ; and before Mutianus could arrive, having entirely defeated Vitellius's army, was proceeding directly towards Rome. This so startled and confounded Vitellius, that he became perfectly ridiculous and dispicable, sometimes proposing terms of accommodation, and offering to lay down his authority, and then reassuming it again, till he occasioned a faction and civil war even in Rome, in which the capitol was besieged, taken, and laid in ashes, and Sabinus the governor of the city was slain. After this, Antonius would hearken to no more treaties or accommodations, but continued his march even to the walls of Rome, where a furious battle of almost a day's continuance ensued, until Vitellius's army was driven into the city, and, through the Martius Campus, and all the streets, pursued with a most terrible slaughter.

In the midst of these devastations, the people, who were then celebrating their Saturnalia, rather than not enjoy the pleasures of the festival, converted the common cala-

A. M. 4073,
&c. or 5480.
Ann. Rom.
69, &c.

A. M. 4074,
&c. or 5481.
Ann. Dom.
70, &c.

mity into mirth and jollity ; so that through the whole city there was both a barbarous and a shameful spectacle, and a scandalous mixture of cruelty and lewdness ; in one place, wounding and slaying ; in another, tipling and bathing ; here, streams of blood and heaps of mangled bodies ; and hard by, lewd debauchees and shameless prostitutes : In short, all the abominable licentiousness of a most dissolute and riotous peace, and all the deplorable miseries of a most dreadful and cruel war.

Thus was this mighty city, the head and empress of the world, taken and ravished by her own natural subjects ; and as it was fatal to many thousands, so it was no less to Vitellius himself, whom the soldiers dragged out of his palace, and without hearkening to any intreaties, binding his hands behind him, threw an halter about his neck, and tearing his very clothes from his back, drew him half-naked into the public forum, through the main street, called Via Sacra ; all the while as he went along treating him with the utmost indignities, and most opprobrious language ; tying his hair backwards, as it was wont to be done to the most execrable malefactors ; pelting him with dung and filth, and holding the point of a sword under his chin, to prevent his concealing his face ; till at length they brought him to the common place of execution for the most notorious criminals, and having there, with many blows and wounds, dispatched him in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and after a short reign of eight months, they thence dragged him with an hook, and having thrown him into the Tiber, made afterwards not only his brother, and only son, but all whom they met with of his party, victims to their fury.

After these murders and ravages were abated, the Roman senate assembled, and, with an unanimous consent, not only declared Vespasian emperor, but conferred the title of Cæsar upon his two sons, Titus and Domitian ; nominated the former to be consul with his father, for the year ensuing, and the latter to be prætor with consular power ; rewarded Mutianus, Antonius, and several others, with great revenues and dignities, for contributing to this happy revolution ; and dispatched couriers to Vespasian at Alexandria to tender him their homage and obedience, and to desire his speedy return to Rome : but as the winter was not so commodious for sailing, he deferred his going to a more convenient season.

Vespasian, as we said, before he left Judea, committed the management of the war against the Jews to his son Titus, as well knowing his extraordinary valour and skill for such an undertaking. Himself had reduced most of the country except Jerusalem ; but Jerusalem was the capital city, fortified with three walls on every side, except where it was fenced with deep valleys, having the castle of Antonia, the temple, the palace of Acra, the towers on Mount Sion, and several other places almost impregnable ; so that great consultation, and a preparation of many materials, were required to carry on such a siege. But what facilitated its reduction were the several parties and factions which had possession of different parts of the city, and were not only murdering and massacring one another, but, in their rage and madness, had destroyed the provisions likewise, which might have served the city for many years. Jerusalem was involved in these sad circumstances, when Titus, with a powerful army, and all kinds of warlike engines, approached, and sat down within six or seven furlongs of the city, a little before the feast of the passover, by which means he shut up an infinite number of people, come from all parts to that solemnity, which in a short time occasioned a great consumption of their provisions.

Upon the sight of so numerous an army, the several factions unanimously agreed to oppose it ; and, sallying out with great resolution and fury, put the Romans to disorder, and obliged them to abandon their camp, and fly to the mountains ; but the Jews were at last repulsed, and driven into the city by the extraordinary skill and valour of Titus, who in this, and all other actions during this siege, greatly signalized himself.

When Titus had placed his engines (which was not done without great opposition), he battered the outward wall, and on the third day of May, making a breach, entered, and took possession of the north quarter of the city, as far as the castle of Antonia, and the valley of Kedron; which when he had done, he gave the besieged all possible assurances of pardon and civil treatment, if they would but submit; but they, judging his humanity to be the effect of cowardice, refused all terms and conditions. Five days after this, Titus broke through the second wall, and though the besieged made several sallies, and drove him out again; yet on the fourth day he recovered the place, and possessed himself of the new lower city; which when he had done, being still desirous to shew them mercy, he sent * Josephus to his countrymen, to exhort them to yield; but though he used all the powerful and pathetic persuasions imaginable, he was entertained with nothing but scoffs and reproaches; so that Titus was now resolved to proceed with more severity against a people who had been perfidious to the highest degree, and stubborn beyond all example: And, accordingly, whenever any escaped out of the city (as the famine compelled many to make their escape), they were no sooner taken by Titus, than he caused them to be scourged and crucified, and that in such numbers, that room was wanting for crosses, and crosses for persons, though, by the cruelty of this spectacle, he only designed to terrify the city, and hasten its surrender.

On the 12th of May, Titus began four mounts for his battering-rams, two near the castle of Antonia, where he was in hopes of taking the temple, and two near the monument of John, the high-priest, where he supposed he might break into the upper city with the greatest facility; but, in two bold sallies, the besieged ruined and destroyed the mounts, and having burnt several battering-rams and other engines, pressed forward, and broke into the very camp of the Romans, though at length they were valiantly repulsed by Titus, who (in a council of war) now resolved to surround the whole city with a wall or intrenchment, to hinder the flight of the besieged, and to prevent all relief from coming into the city, thereby verifying our Blessed Lord's predictions to a tittle: (a) "The days shall come upon thee, that thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee around, and keep thee in on every side."

This work, though near five miles in compass, was, with incredible celerity, finished in three days; but it made no impression upon the besieged, though the famine began

* How Josephus came to be at Jerusalem, and in the camp of Titus, while he besieged it, himself tells us in his history of the Jewish wars, viz. that after the reduction of Jotapata, which he gallantly defended, he became a prisoner to Vespasian; but, having foretold his advancement to the empire (which accordingly came to pass), he was not only set at liberty, but received into great confidence, and attended his son at the siege of Jerusalem, where he made a long speech to his countrymen, by all the arguments that he could invent, persuading them to surrender, but all in vain; for though his discourse drew tears from his own eyes, (as himself tells us, l. vi. c. 9.) the factions were not in the least softened by it. After the destruction of Jerusalem, he went with his conqueror to Rome, where Vespasian shewed him great respect, and (as himself tells in his life) lodged him in his own house, made him a free citizen of Rome, assigned him a pension, gave him lands in Judea, and, above all, ordered him a public statue. These favours Titus, when he came to the empire, encreased, and in honour of him, had his "History of the Wars of the Jews," which was now finished, deposited in the public library. This history is a continued account of the Jew-

ish affairs, from the taking of Jerusalem by Antiochus Epiphanes, down to the utter ruin of it by Titus, consisting in all of 242 years; but the most considerable and valuable part of it is, that of the six last years, where he describes the last Jewish wars, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the miseries of his countrymen, in the most lively and affecting manner. Besides this, Josephus wrote another history, entitled, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, which was finished in the 13th year of Domitian. One half of this history is taken from the books of the Old Testament; but he has ventured to add several facts that are not to be found in these writings; and to those which he has wholly taken from them, he has given such an artificial turn, as shews, that his intention was to accommodate the most surprising passages in the Holy Scriptures to the humour and opinions of the persons to whom he wrote. Besides these two histories, he wrote an account of his own life, two treatises against Apion, and one concerning the martyrdom of the Maccabees, which Erasmus justly styles a master-piece of eloquence. *Echard's Ecclesiastical History.*

(a) Luke xix. 43, &c.

A. M. 4074,
&c. or 5481.
Ann. Dom.
70, &c.

to rage violently, and such a mortality ensued, that, from the 14th of April to the 1st of July, 115,080 carcasses of the poorer sort were carried out to be buried at the public charge, 600,000 were cast out of the gates; and when the number of the dead bodies increased so, that they had no place to dispose of them, they gathered them together into the largest houses adjoining, and there shut them up. All this while the famine increased to such a degree, that a bushel of corn was sold for six hundred crowns; that wives took the meat out of their husbands mouths, children from their parents, and mothers from their infants; that old men were driven from their meat, as persons of no use, and young men tortured to confess where their provisions lay; that sinks and holes were continually raked to find the old dung of oxen for food, that the very soldiers (who were the last that would want) began to eat girdles, shoes, sticks, and hay; and that a woman of quality even boiled her own child, with an intent to eat it; an act so detestable, that Titus, after he had insisted upon his frequent offers of peace and pardon to the Jews, declared publicly, "that he would bury the abominable crime in the ruins of their country, and not suffer the sun to shine upon that city where mothers ate their own children, and where fathers, no less culpable, reduced them to that extremity by their obstinacy."

With this resolution he cut down all the groves within a considerable distance of the city, and causing more mounts to be raised, on the first of July he began to batter the wall of Antonia, and on the fifth entered the castle by force, and pursued the flying Jews even to the temple; which when he had done, both he and Josephus again exhorted them to surrender, but all to no purpose: They obstinately refused all accommodation, and made it their boast, that they had rather endure the worst of miseries. Titus hearing this, in order to make an easy ascent to the temple, overturned the foundation of Antonia; and having seized the north and west porticos, or cloysters of the outward range of the temple, he set them on fire, as the Jews did other porticos, to hinder the Romans from making their approaches. On the eighth day of August, Titus, perceiving that the walls of the inner temple were too strong for the battering-rams, and that the foundation of the gates could not be undermined, was obliged to set fire to them, yet still with an intent, if possible, to save the temple itself; but it so fell out, that on the tenth, a certain soldier, contrary to the command of the general, excited by a kind of Divine impulse, cast a flaming firebrand through the golden window into the chambers and buildings on the north side, which immediately set them on fire, and, notwithstanding the utmost endeavours to the contrary, spread throughout the whole fabric, and consumed the most glorious and beautiful structure that the world ever saw; whilst the Roman soldiers, pursuing their victory with all imaginable fury and revenge, cut in pieces all that they found about the temple, and set fire to the rest of the buildings.

In all these confusions, those who were the chiefs in this sedition found means to retire to the upper and strongest part of the city, called Sion, situated upon a steep rock, where they threatened to defend themselves to the last, and there tyrannized with more cruelty than ever; till Titus, having raised his batteries, and made a breach in the wall, they lost all their courage, and in great consternation abandoned the towers, which were their only strength, and in vain sought to escape by hiding themselves in vaults and privies, from whence both John * and Simon, two principal ringleaders of their different

* This John was the son of one Levi, born at Gischala, and one of the principal men of the place. When Titus came before it, under a pretence of surrendering it, he made his escape, and came with a party of men to Jerusalem, where, joining with the Zealots, and being naturally a crafty man, eloquent in his speech, and ambitious beyond measure, he soon

began to affect a sovereign power over the rest, and became the commander of one faction, as Simon, the son of Gioras, did of another. For he, gathering together great multitudes of robbers and murderers, who got into the mountainous parts, reduced all Idumæa, wasted Judea, encamped himself before Jerusalem, and was at length let in by the citizens to de-

factions, were dragged out, and the former condemned to perpetual imprisonment, whilst the latter was appointed to grace the general's triumph.

A. M. 4075.
&c. or 5482.
Ann. Dom.
71. &c.

The Romans, having now gained the walls, and with shouts of joy placed their colours upon the towers, broke loose all over the city, and ranged up and down in the streets, killing all that fell in their way without distinction, till the passages and alleys were choked up with carcases, and the kennels of the city ran with blood, as if it had been to quench the fire, which was now become one general conflagration.

To this fatal end was the famous city of Jerusalem, after a siege of above five months, reduced, in the second year of Vespasian's reign, and thirty-eight years after our Lord's crucifixion; in which siege there perished no less than 1,100,000, and no fewer than 97,000 were taken captives, besides the 237,490 more (according to Josephus) who fell in the wars which preceded it. At last, when the soldiers had neither rapine nor bloodshed left for their rage and indignation to work upon, Titus ordered them to lay the city and the temple level with the ground, or, in the words of our Saviour's prediction, "not to leave one stone upon another;" which order was so punctually executed, that (except three towers, which for their strength and beauty were left as monuments of the city's stateliness to posterity) the whole was laid so flat, that the place looked as if it had never been inhabited.

While these things were transacting at Jerusalem, Vespasian, who entered upon the government in the fifty-ninth year of his age, having been received at Rome with all imaginable testimonies of joy and triumph, as the only person whose virtues and excellencies could recover the languishing state of the empire, began immediately to act conformably to the hopes which all men had conceived of him in administering justice, and in reforming the laws and customs of Rome; honourably rewarding those who had served him, and pardoning his adversaries with singular clemency.

Mean time the conclusion of the Jewish war occasioned great rejoicings at Rome, where all mens mouths were filled with the praises of Titus, who had shewn himself so expert a soldier and commander; and, accordingly, a triumph was decreed by the senate both for him and his father, who had so bravely managed the beginning of the war. When Titus returned to Rome, he was received with the universal applauses of the whole city, and, within a few days after, both the father and son entered upon their triumph, which was as solemn and magnificent as Rome ever saw; wherein, among other rich and glorious spoils, vast quantities of gold taken out of the temple, and the body of the Jewish law, (the last, and not the least remarkable of all these spoils) were exhibited to the view of the people. This was the first time that Rome ever saw the father and son triumph together: And as Vespasian built a new temple to peace, wherein he deposited most of the Jewish spoils, so Titus had a triumphal arch of great beauty and magnificence erected to his honour, whereon are inscribed all his noble exploits against the Jews, and which (as a lasting monument against that impious and perverse nation) remains almost entire to this very day.

After this happy peace, Vespasian proceeded to the regulation of the several abuses and corruptions which, in the late reigns, and the civil confusions, had crept into the state. He restrained the luxury and licentiousness of his officers and soldiers, not sparing those who had been assistants to him, and partners with him in his victories. He reformed the two principal orders among the Romans, the senators, and the Equites, degrading all those he found unworthy of their dignities, and supplying their places with the most deserving persons he could procure, either in Italy or other provinces. He examined into all courts of judicature, and where he found law-suits multiplied to a pro-

fend them against John, who, at the head of the Zealots, did many cruel and tyrannical actions. So that Simon and his army were in the city, while John and his adherents were in the temple, fighting and destroying one another, even while the enemy was at the walls. *Echard's Ecclesiastical History.*

A. M. 4083.
&c. or 5409,
Ann. Dom.
79, &c.

digious number, or extended to an unreasonable length, he appointed proper persons to determine them, and made many excellent laws to digest and reduce such matters into a far less compass; and to reform the corruption of usurers, as well as the looseness of youth, he ordained that no person should recover any money of young heirs, if it was lent to be repaid with interest upon the decease of their fathers.

And as he was severe in punishing vice, so he was no less remarkable for rewarding all kinds of merit, though his more particular bounty was extended to the learned professors of arts and sciences. He settled a constant salary of an hundred thousand sesterces upon the teachers of rhetoric, to be paid yearly out of the exchequer. He entertained Josephus, the famous writer of the Jewish Wars and Antiquities, with great civility, and honoured him with a statue. Pliny the Elder, an eminent natural historian, Quintilian, the renowned orator, and many other persons of great learning, flourished in his reign, and were highly esteemed by him; as the greatest masters of all other arts and sciences were invited to Rome, from all parts of the world, by his generous allowances. To all which we may add, that his courtesy and clemency appeared constantly, both in public and private, so that scarce one innocent person was punished through his whole reign; and so contrary was his temper to that of most of his predecessors, that he could not so much as look upon the sufferings of a criminal without signifying his compassion by his sighs and tears.

But though he was thus mild and merciful, brave and generous, yet he did not preserve himself from the scandal of avarice and rapaciousness; which was grounded upon his selling all the lands in Judea, and appropriating the money to himself; upon his obliging all the Jews in the Roman empire to pay yearly two drachmas to the capitol, as they formerly had done to the temple at Jerusalem; and upon his laying heavy tributes upon several provinces, and particularly a scandalous excise upon urine. But for this, and all other his severe impositions, authors do much excuse him, upon the account of the great necessities of the state, and the emptiness of the exchequer, when he came first to the government; reminding us withal, that his public works and edifices were highly chargeable and expensive; his presents and pensions were numerous and large; his feasts and entertainments frequent and magnificent; and that, though his revenue, by these exactions, was augmented, yet he always employed it to noble purposes, and laid it out with great wisdom and liberality.

By this wise administration of public affairs, he increased the love and respect of the whole senate and people, the nearer he approached to the end of his days; and, when he had finished his course, which was in the sixty-ninth year of his age, and tenth of his reign, his death was greatly lamented, and his memory gratefully preserved, as being a prince of great wisdom, moderation, and modesty, next to Julius Cæsar in war, and Augustus in peace; and “in whom (as Pliny expresses it) greatness and majesty had changed nothing, but only to make his power of doing good answerable to his will.”

Upon the death of the great Vespasian, his eldest son Titus, both by the general consent, and his father's last will and testament, succeeded to the empire, though not without some obstructions from his ambitious brother Domitian. Titus had served in many wars with great honour, and discharged many civil offices with no less wisdom; yet, during his father's reign, he had given too many occasions of prejudice and aspersion, upon account of his severity, and voluptuous life, his extravagant passion for Berenice, king Agrippa's sister, and his promoting his father's impositions and extortions; inso-much, that he was generally looked upon as a second Nero, and scarce any man ever arrived at the empire with a more sullied reputation, and a greater repugnancy of the people. But in a short time these accusations and aversions turned all to his advantage, and his virtues gained him a reputation, under the burden of an empire, which he could not attain under the freedom of a private person: For, from his first accession, such was his skill and address, as well as good fortune, in gaining upon the hearts and

affections of all people, that he was generally styled, “ the love and delight of mankind.” His notion was, that “ no man ought to depart sorrowful from the presence of a prince ;” and therefore he never sent any away with an unpleasing answer : And so strong a propensity had he to do good, that being told one night by those about him, that he had done nothing for any person that day, with a sorrowful countenance he replied, “ O my friends, I have lost a day !” A sentence worthy of an emperor, and fit to be retained in the memory of all princes.

A. M. 4085,
&c. or 5492.
Ann. Dom.
81, &c.

His first step towards gaining the hearts of his subjects, and his happy government of the empire, was his moderating his passions, and bridling his strong inclinations, particularly by withdrawing himself from the beautiful Berenice, and sending her away, notwithstanding their mutual loves ; and by dismissing several persons who had formerly been the chief instruments of his pleasures, rightly judging them unbecoming the dignity and majesty of his present office.

After this he proceeded, with a better grace and authority, in the great affairs of the state, and particularly in regulating and reforming several mischiefs which had not been perfectly removed in his father’s reign. All informers, promoters, and petty-foggers, the bane of society and the pests of the city, he took care to exterminate, by causing some to be sold for slaves, and others to be transported to uninhabited islands ; and to put a farther stop to the corruptions and tediousness of law-suits, he prohibited, among other things, that the same case should be tried by several laws, or that the estate of any dead person should be claimed after such a precise number of years.

The same activity in repairing ancient buildings, and erecting new ones ; the same freedom of conversation, magnificence of living, generosity to friends, clemency to enemies, * encouragement to men of learning, and courtesy to all, that his father had shewn, Titus was not forgetful to imitate ; so that if ever a people may be said to be happy under any prince, the Romans were certainly so under him : And yet in his short reign, there happened some misfortunes and calamities, no less astonishing than deplorable, viz. a most dreadful eruption of Mount Vesuvius, which, being accompanied with violent earthquakes, ruined many cities, and even threw its ashes into distant countries, and to Rome in such quantities, that the sun was darkened for many days together ; in the year following, a prodigious fire in Rome, which lasted three days and nights incessantly, consumed the capitol, the pantheon, and several other temples, the library of Augustus, and many more noble buildings ; and this followed by a dangerous pestilence, supposed to be occasioned by the ashes of Mount Vesuvius, in which there commonly died ten thousand every day. In all which miseries, Titus behaved himself not only with the care and regard of a prince, but also with the tenderness and compassion of a father.

But heaven had determined that so good an emperor should not long bless so corrupt an age, and a people so flagitious as the Romans were then become ; for, after a lingering illness, he died in the 41st year of his age, and the third of his reign, not without suspicion of poison from his brother Domitian ; and as soon as his death was known, a general grief and sadness appeared in all the city, which, in a short time, spread itself

* Of his great clemency we have these remarkable instances,—Two of the Patrician degree, being convicted of treason for aspiring to the empire, he inflicted no punishment upon them, but only privately admonished them to desist, mildly telling them, that the empire was given by Providence, and that it was in vain for them to commit a villany in hopes of obtaining it. The same night he entertained them at supper, and, the next day at a spectacle of gladiators, placed them by himself, and when the combatants weapons, according to custom, were presented to him, he

publicly desired their judgment and approbation.—In the like manner, though his brother Domitian was continually conspiring, and exciting the legions against him, yet so far was he from punishing him for it, that he comported himself towards him as he had always done, giving him the title of Associate and Successor, and with tears privately intreating him not to attempt that by treason and fratricide, which, in a short time, he would obtain freely and in course. *Echard’s Roman History in the Life of Titus.*

A. M. 4086,
&c. or 5492.
Ann. Dom.
82. &c.

over every province, to the utmost bounds of the empire, and made him in all parts be lamented, as though the world had been deprived of a perpetual protector.

The great respect which all had for Titus and his father, caused his brother Domitian to succeed him in the empire without any opposition, notwithstanding the ill opinion which many had justly conceived of him. In the beginning of his reign, however, he behaved with great moderation, concealed his vicious inclinations, and did several commendable things to gain the good will and affections of the people. So far was he from shewing any tendency to cruelty and bloodshed, that he was determined, by a public edict, to forbid the sacrificing of oxen; and so far from any signs of avarice or parsimony, that he acted very generously upon all occasions, and made it the chief topic of his advice to those that were about him, to avoid rapine and sordidness.

In rebuilding several stately and noble fabrics which had been destroyed by the fire in his brother's reign; in exhibiting a sea-fight on a vast lake dug for that purpose, and by great numbers of ships, almost amounting to complete fleets; in celebrating the great games and feasts called Secular, of all others the most magnificent, as happening but once in a hundred years; in representing all those shows and spectacles that had ever been known in Rome, besides many more that were newly invented; in the many sumptuous banquets and entertainments that he made, the large donatives which he distributed, and the valuable things which he threw among the common people by way of missilia; in these, and such like things as he knew would captivate the esteem of the vulgar, he was as expensive and ambitious as any of his predecessors: Nor was he defective in some other things, which justly deserve the commendations of all men.

He was diligent for a while in the administration of justice, and would many times sit himself in an extraordinary manner in the courts of judicature. He severely punished all such judges and counsellors as were corrupt and acted for bribes; and in this regard kept so watchful an eye upon the city magistrates and governors of provinces, that there was never known more equity and modesty among the great officers than in his reign. He suppressed such libels and defamatory writings as any ways reflected upon persons of quality of either sex; but then he expected that persons of quality should comport themselves according to their character, and for this reason, turned a senator out of the house, purely for his immoderate delight in buffoonery and dancing, judging that those things were below the dignity of that venerable order. From such women of distinction as were scandalous in their lives, he took away the privilege of litters, and their capacities of legacies and inheritance; and struck a Roman knight out of the list of the judges, for receiving his wife after she had been repudiated for adultery. The castration of children he utterly prohibited, and moderated the prices of eunuchs; but the whoredoms of the vestal virgins he punished without mercy. Such as were convicted but once, suffered death as ordinary malefactors; but others were buried alive, according to the ancient custom, and their associate male criminals scourged to death. These, and the like memorable acts of justice, have been highly applauded by many; but in most of them he used such pride and elation, and shewed himself so excessively vain-glorious, as gave almost evident tokens of his future enormities.

After the many conquests which his great * general Agricola obtained for him over

* This Agricola, having first conquered Galgacus, the great commander of the Britons, went as far as the Orkades, and subdued them. He was the first who discovered Britain to be an island, and in the fourth year of Domitian reduced it into an entire and civilized province: Of all which he wrote a plain account to the emperor, without any amplifying terms: But as the emperor was uneasy to see his own glory eclipsed by a private person, his letters were received with a show of great joy, but in reality

with no small concern. In a short time after this Domitian recalled him from Britain, under pretence of giving him the lieutenancy of Syria; but when Agricola perceived with what coldness he was received, to prevent farther inconveniences he retired from court, and for ever after gave himself up to an unactive course of life, though his death (which happened in a few years) was not without suspicion of poison by Domitian's procurement. *Echard's Roman History in the Life of Domitian.*

the Britons, and the reduction of the Sarmatians, Dacians, and the Catti, a people in Germany, for which he vainly assumed the surname of Germanicus, his pride and impiety, as well as cruelty and brutishness, became insufferable. He not only caused his statues in the capitol to be made of pure gold and silver, to which the people, in great crowds, came to sacrifice continually; but his ambition carried him so far as to assume divine honours: For, as he styled himself the son of Pallas or Minerva, so he decreed that no man should presume to call him, either in writing or discourse, by any other title than that of **OUR LORD OR OUR GOD**.

A. M. 4089,
&c. or 5196.
Ann. Dom.
85, &c.

This monstrous arrogancy brought him into all kinds of enormities, and was the fatal fore-runner of many excessive cruelties, whereby he destroyed great numbers of all sorts, without mercy or consideration. Many illustrious senators, who had some of them been consuls, under pretence of practising against the state, he put to death; some of them in their banishments, and all without the privilege of making their defence. Multitudes of others he ordered to be executed upon very slight and trifling occasions; Ælius Lamia, for his making use of jests, though they were old and innocent; Salveus Coceanus, for celebrating the nativity of Otho the emperor; Salustius Lucullus, for suffering a new sort of lances to be called Lucullas, after his own name; and Junius Rusticus, for publishing a writing in commendation of Pætus Thrasea and Helvidius Priscus, two philosophers; upon which occasion he banished all the philosophers and mathematicians out of Rome and Italy; and, among these, the celebrated stoic Epictetus.

The cruelty of these proceedings, and some personal affronts received from Domitian, made Lucius Antonius, governor of the Upper Germany, raise a dangerous rebellion in those parts, and, being commander of a numerous army, usurp the title of emperor. The success of this insurrection remained a long while doubtful, and became daily more formidable to Domitian, who had so much lost the love of his people, till at length his general Normandus dexterously surprised Antonius, just when a sudden overflowing of the Rhine had stopped the arrival of his German auxiliaries, and destroyed both him and his army. After this victory and success Domitian's cruelty increased, shewing no kind of mercy to those who had been of the adverse party. Nay, that he might thoroughly revenge himself, and discover all their accomplices, he invented new kinds of tortures, and, in this particular, exceeded Nero himself, that whereas Nero was satisfied in commanding executions to be done at a distance, he took pleasure in beholding his cruelties exercised before his eyes, which at length indeed became his only diversion.

It can scarce be thought that a prince, who, in some respects, surpassed even Nero himself in his vices and cruelties, should in the least come behind him in his hatred of the church of God; and therefore we need less wonder, that in the fourteenth year of his reign we find him raising the second general persecution of the Christians, in which, by his letters and bloody edicts, he caused the death and banishment of infinite numbers, both in Rome and other places; in which (among other eminent Christians) St John, after his miraculous escape out of the cauldron of flaming oil, was banished to the island Patmos; Antipas was put to death at Pergamus; Timothy at Ephesus; and Dionysius the Areopagite at Athens: in which he not only destroyed the heads of the church, but proceeded to the execution of his own relations, insomuch, that he put to death his cousin-german Flavius Clemens, in the very year that he was consul; banished the consul's wife, Domitilla, to Pandataria, and a niece of the same name to Pontia, for no other crime but their embracing Christianity.

By these cruel and bloody practices Domitian became odious to the greatest part of his subjects, and exceeding terrible to the * senate and nobility, insomuch, that

* One evening, having made a kind and solemn public entertainment, at the entrance of his palace he invited of the greatest part of the senate to a pu- ordered them to be solemnly received and ceremo-

A. M. 4100,
&c. or 5407.
Ann. Dom.
96, &c.

some of the chief of them, merely for the preservation of their own lives, were forced into designs against his. For when his wife Domitia, in searching into his black table-book, which he kept purposely for cruel and bloody designs, found her own name there, with many of the chief officers of his household ; to them she shewed the book, thereby to excite them to concert measures for his dispatch. A conspiracy was accordingly formed, in which the principals were Parthenius his chamberlain, and Stephanus his steward, who, for several days, wore a dagger wrapt up in wool in his left arm, pretending an accidental hurt in that place. As therefore the emperor was going to his bath, Parthenius, pretending that there was in his chamber a person who had a matter to impart to him, of too great importance to be safely deferred, drew him aside thither, where Stephanus, under pretence of discovering a conspiracy to him, presented him with a list of several names ; which while the emperor was reading with horror and astonishment, he struck the dagger into his groin ; but before he could give him a second wound, the emperor closed with him, and with great violence threw him to the ground, where, while they were struggling together, Parthenius, Maximus, Clodianus, and other conspirators, who were of his own household, came furiously upon him, and in the forty-fifth year of his age, and fifteenth of his reign, with several wounds dispatched him.

Upon the death of Domitian the Roman senate, after some small consultation, made choice of Cocceius Nerva to succeed him. He was born in Crete, and was the first emperor who was neither of a Roman nor Italian family ; but was, at this time, for his many virtues, experience, and age, a person of the greatest reputation and esteem in Rome. At his accession to the empire, he took care to rescind the odious acts and decrees of his predecessor. He recalled the Christians, who from Rome and other cities were banished in the late reign, and permitted them a free exercise of their religion. He shewed the same kindness and humanity to all others who had been unjustly treated by his predecessor, and restored whatever of their goods could be found about the imperial palaces. He released and discharged all the cities of the empire from the severe taxes and impositions which Vespasian and Domitian had laid upon them. He made a distribution among all the people of Rome, much larger than any of his predecessors had done. He purchased estates to be divided among decayed citizens, and had the sons of the poorer sort brought up at his own charges : And, above all, he conferred great favours, and bestowed large gifts upon his friends and relations, upon men of learning and liberal sciences, whereof he was a great encourager.

Nor was the clemency of this prince any ways inferior to his kindness and liberality. For, at his first accession to the government, he solemnly swore, that “ no senator of Rome should, by his command, be put to death ;” which oath he so religiously observed, that when two of that order had conspired against his life, he used no kind of severity against them ; but first sending for them, “ to let them see that he was not ignorant of their traiterous designs,” he carried them with him to the public theatre, placed them on each side of him, and presenting each with a sword, told them be-

niously conducted, and locked up in a spacious hall, hung round with black, and illuminated by a few melancholy lamps, which were only sufficient to shew the horror of the place, and to discover several coffins, upon which were fairly written the names of the senators that were invited. The senators were filled with strange fears and apprehensions at the appearance of this dismal scene, and the prospect of death so solemnly carved out for them ; when, in the height of their frightful imaginations, after some time

waiting, their fears were increased by an entertainment of many naked persons with their bodies all over blackened, who entered the hall with drawn swords in one hand, and flaming torches in the other. The guests, at this dreadful appearance, expected nothing but immediate death ; when suddenly the naked persons, after they had danced some time about them, set open the doors, and told them, that “ the emperor gave all the company leave to withdraw.” *Echard's Roman History, in the Life of Domitian.*

fore all the people, "that they might experience the goodness of the weapons upon his body;" for so confident was he of his own innocence, that he often said, "That though he should quit the empire, and return to a private life, he had done nothing that could cause him to fear any man."

A. M. 4102,
&c. or 5509.
Ann. Dom.
98, &c.

But notwithstanding all this, he had not sat long upon the throne before the soldiers, who in the late reign had been indulged in all manner of licentiousness, began to be mutinous upon the account of Domitian's murder, resolving to fall upon and destroy all those who had any concern in his assassination: So that the emperor, finding himself insufficient to withstand their fury, and perceiving that his age and infirmities had impaired his authority over them, was resolved to adopt some worthy person for his successor, who should be able both to support him while he lived, and govern the empire after his decease. Though he had many considerable friends and relations of his own, who hoped for this high promotion, yet, like a just and generous prince, he sought only the public good, and wisely made choice of Ulpian Trajanus, an utter stranger to his family, but the greatest and most deserving person of his age.

This determination he accordingly put in execution; and having, with the usual solemnities, adopted him in the capitol, and made him Cæsar in the senate, he immediately sent ambassadors to him at Cologne, (for at that time he was governor of the Lower Germany) with the ensigns and arms of the empire. This proved so great a curb to the licentiousness and mutinies of the soldiers, that from thenceforward they continued in a perfect quietness and obedience. But Nerva lived not long to enjoy the benefit of this happy choice; for about three months after, falling into a violent passion against a senator, named Regulus, he put himself into such disorder, that by reason of the feebleness of his body, and lowness of his spirits, he fell into a fever, which in the sixty-sixth year of his age, and the second of his reign, carried him off.

Upon the death of Nerva, Trajan was joyfully received (as emperor) at Rome, both by the senate and people. He was a Spaniard by birth, of an illustrious family, born in a town called Italica, not far from the city of Seville; and being now above two and forty years of age, of a strong body, and vigorous mind, happily tempered between the warmth of youth and the experience of old age, he was in all respects qualified for the greatest attempts and the noblest enterprises. In the beginning of his reign, he was blessed with the happiness of having the greatest master of his age, that admirable philosopher and biographer, Plutarch, by whose wise instructions, added to his own abilities, he pursued the administration of his government, with that moderation and justice, and that wisdom and magnanimity, as raised both the love and admiration of all men.

At his first entering into the senate, he declared publicly, "That no good man, by his command, should ever suffer death or disgrace;" which he confirmed by a solemn oath, and inviolably observed it through his whole reign. His first step was, to reform the laws that were defective, and to put in execution those that were good; to take care that equity and justice were strictly and faithfully administered in all cases; to advance the most worthy and virtuous men to the highest posts, and to reclaim such as were otherwise with gentleness and clemency: but as mutiny in an army was a matter of dangerous consequence, the Pætorian cohorts and their commanders, who had raised the sedition against Nerva, he sent for and disbanded without any farther punishment, (as some say) though others affirm that he put several of them to death.

The informers, promoters, and petti-foggers, who had done great mischiefs in former reigns, he utterly exterminated; and put down the pantomimes, farce-players, and buffoons, as effeminate diversions, and unbecoming the Roman gravity: but he rebuilt the grand cirque, wherein more manly exercises were performed, much larger and more beautiful than it was before, with an inscription, signifying, "That it was to make it

A. M. 4108,
&c. or 5515.
Ann. Dom.
104, &c.

worthy to receive the people of Rome." The truth is, his love to the people of Rome, as well as all his other subjects, was visible in his relief of the poor, and education of their children; in his behaving to all men with courtesy and affability, without disguise or dissimulation; in entertaining persons of merit (though of no high degree) with a most open familiarity; bestowing upon such honours and wealth, though he had but a small acquaintance with them; and in short, in "treating all his subjects (as himself expresses the matter) with the same usage, as he himself would have desired of his prince, had he been a private person." For these, and many more instances of his goodness and paternal care to his people, he not only obtained the title of Pater Patriæ, but the senate likewise conferred on him that of Optimus, as the best of all princes; which he esteemed more than all the glories of his victories and conquests, because it related not so much to his courage and conduct, as to his morality and piety.

His mistaken piety indeed, or zeal for the religion established in the empire, confirmed his prejudices against Christianity and made him look upon the professors of it with a jealous eye, not only as subverters of the national faith, and enemies to the gods of the Romans, but (as their adversaries were pleased to represent them) establishers likewise of some illegal societies, that were the nurseries of faction and sedition. Under this plausible pretence, the third general persecution of the church, in the third year of this emperor's reign, commenced; wherein, among an infinite number of others, St Clement, bishop of Rome, being thrown into the sea with an anchor about his neck; St Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, being first scourged, and then crucified; and St Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, being condemned to be thrown to the wild beasts, obtained the glorious crown of martyrdom. This persecution for some time went on, though with different degrees of severity, in several parts of the empire, and was so much the more afflicting to the Christians, because they generally suffered under the notion of malefactors and traitors, and under an emperor famed throughout the world for his singular justice and moderation: but it had not continued long before this prince, upon his reception of a letter from Pliny, the proconsul in Bythynia, (wherein he represents "the innocency and simplicity of the Christians, that they were an harmless and inoffensive sort of people, who only worshipped Christ as God, and bound themselves by oath to abstain from all wickedness") abated the rigour of it; so that the fire which had hitherto raged with great fury, began now to be extinguished, and only crept up and down in private corners.

In the mean time, the Christian religion, notwithstanding all opposition to the contrary, was spread through the greatest parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa, extended from the British islands to the farthest Indies, and was established not only in cities and populous places, but in towns and country villages, as Pliny, in the above cited letter, testifies. The metropolitan cities were all under bishops of the greatest eminence and piety. The four great cities of the Roman empire, Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, usually styled apostolical churches, were governed by apostolical men. Publius was at Athens; Polycarp at Smyrna; Onesimus at Ephesus; and Papias at Hierapolis; with many others of primitive integrity in different places*.

Such was the state of the Christian church, in the beginning of the second century, increasing and flourishing after a marvellous manner; and though it wanted all human helps, though it had all the force and policy of the world bent against it, growing by

* [Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, and Polycarp of Smyrna, left behind them writings of which some are still extant, and of very great value; not for any profundity of doctrine which they contain, for Christianity was then as it ought to be now, a practical religion; but for the information which they give of the constitution of the apostolical church. Papias, too, appears to have been a voluminous writer; but of his works nothing remains but a few fragments, preserved by Irenæus, Eusebius, and others, and collected and published by Dr Routh, with learned annotations, in that curious and valuable work, entitled *Reliquiæ Sacræ*. If Onesimus and Publius were authors, not a fragment of their writings hath come down to us.]

opposition and oppression, and overbearing all the powers of earth and hell. (a) "Whereunto then shall we liken the kingdom of God, and its wonderful increase, or with what comparison shall we compare it?" There is indeed some resemblance of it in the prodigious fecundity of seeds, which accordingly our blessed Saviour frequently makes use of to illustrate it; but there is nothing parallel to it in the history of all the religions which have obtained among men, from the beginning of the world to this day. And therefore, as this shews that the original of it was from heaven, and that the hand of Omnipotence has all along guided and preserved it; so it gives us a full assurance of hope, that the same Divine Providence will continue to protect and defend it, (b) "until we come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly, and church of the first born, which are written in heaven; to God the judge of all; to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant; and to the spirits of just men made perfect." Amen, Amen

A. M. 4112.
&c. or 5519.
Ann. Dom.
108, &c.

(a) Luke iv. 30.

(b) Heb. xii. 22, &c.

THE END.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

OF THE

HISTORY OF THE BIBLE.

PERIOD I.

From the Creation to the Deluge, 1656; according to Dr Hales, 2256 years.

Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.
1 or	1	THE creation of the world and our first parents.	4004 or	5411
3	100	The birth of Cain, Adam's eldest son.	4001	5311
4	101	The birth of Abel.	4000	5310
128	201	Cain kills his brother Abel.	3876	5210
130	230	The birth of Seth, son of Adam and Eve.	3874	5181
235	435	The birth of Enos, son of Seth.	3769	4976
325	625	The birth of Cainan, son of Enos.	3679	4786
395	795	The birth of Mahalaleel, son of Cainan.	3609	4616
460	960	The birth of Jared, son of Mahalaleel.	3544	4451
622	1122	The birth of Enoch, son of Jared.	3382	4289
687	1287	The birth of Methuselah, son of Enoch.	3317	4124
874	1474	The birth of Lamech, son of Methuselah.	3130	3937
930	930	The death of Adam, aged 930 years.	3074	4481
987	1487	The translation of Enoch, aged 365 years.	3017	3914
1042	1142	The death of Seth, aged 912 years.	2962	4269
1056	1656	The birth of Noah, son of Lamech.	2948	3755
1140	1340	The death of Enos, aged 905 years.	2864	4071
1235	1534	The death of Cainan, aged 910 years.	2769	3877

Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.
1290 or	1690	The death of Mahalaleel, aged 895 years.	2714 or	3721
1422	1922	The death of Jared, aged 962 years.	2582	3489
1536	2136	Noah warned by God of the future deluge.	2468	3275
1651	2227	The death of Lamech, aged 777 years.	2353	3184
1656	2256	The death of Methuselah, the longest liver of all men.	2348	3155
		The same year Noah, being 600 years old, by God's command enters the ark.		

PERIOD II.

From the Deluge to the Calling of Abraham, 426 years and 6 months; according to Dr Hales, 1077 years.

Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.
1657 or	2257	NOAH, with his family and three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet, leave the ark.	2347 or	3154
		The Rainbow, the pledge of security from inundation.		
1658	2258	The birth of Arphaxad, son of Shem.	2346	3153
1663	2263	Noah plants a vineyard, &c.	2341	3148
1693	2393	The birth of Salah, son of Arphaxad.	2311	3018
1723	2523	The birth of Heber, son of Salah.	2281	2888
1757	2657	The birth of Peleg, son of Heber.	2247	2754

Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.	Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.
1770 or 2797	2857	The building of the tower of Babel, the confusion of languages, and dispersion of nations.	2234 or 2614	2554	2289 or 3539	Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams, &c.		1715 or 1872	
1771	2857	The beginning of the Babylonian or Assyrian monarchy,—and of the Egyptian.	2233	2554	2298	3548	Jacob goes down to Egypt, &c.	1706	1863
1787	2787	The birth of Reu, son of Peleg.	2217	2624	2433	3683	Revolution in Egypt; the sufferings of the Israelites; Moses born, &c.	1571	1728
1819	2919	The birth of Serug, son of Reu.	2185	2492	2473	3723	Moses flies to Midian; marries Jethro's daughter; the vision of the bush, &c.	1531	1688
1849	3049	The birth of Nahor, son of Serug.	2155	2362	2513	3763	Moses, commissioned by God, goes to Pharaoh; the plagues of Egypt; the deliverance of the Israelites, &c.	1491	1648
1878	3128	The birth of Terah, son of Nahor.	2126	2283					
1943	2955	The death of Nimrod, succeeded by Belus.	2061	2456					
1948	3198	The birth of Haran, son of Terah.	2056	2213					
1969	2969	The death of Belus, succeeded by Ninus.	2035	3442					
2006	2606	The death of Noah, aged 950 years, and the beginning of postdiluvian idolatry.	1998	2805					
2008	3258	The birth of Abram, son of Terah.	1996	2153					
2017	3318	The death of Ninus, succeeded by his wife Semiramis.	1987	2093					
2018	3268	The birth of Sarai, Abram's wife.	1986	2143					
2059	3318	The death of Semiramis, succeeded by her son Ninyas.	1945	2093					
2083	3318	The call of Abram, from Ur to Haran in Mesopotamia, where his father died, aged 205 years.	1917	2093					

PERIOD III.

From the calling of Abraham to the Israelites departure out of Egypt, in all 430 years.

Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.
2083 or 3333		ABRAHAM's second call, &c.	1921 or 2078	
2084	3334	Returns from Egypt to Canaan, &c.	1920	2077
2091	3341	His victory over the five kings, &c.	1913	2070
2094	3344	Has a son named Ishmael, &c.	1910	2067
2107	3357	Intercedes for Sodom, &c. their destruction.	1897	2054
2108	3358	Removes to Mamre. Isaac born.	1896	2053
2133	3383	Offers up Isaac in sacrifice, &c. Sarah dies.	1871	2028
2146	3398	Sends his servant to procure a wife for Isaac.	1858	2013
2148	3398	Isaac marries Rebecca.	1856	2013
2186	3438	Abraham dies.	1818	1973
2168	3418	Jacob and Esau born.	1836	1993
2245	3495	Isaac blesses Jacob, who departs to Haran, marries first Leah, and then Rachel, &c.	1759	1916
2276	3526	Jacob makes Joseph his favourite; his dreams, &c. he is sold into Egypt.	1728	1885

PERIOD IV.

From the Israelites departure out of Egypt to their entrance into the land of Canaan, in all 40 years.

Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.
2513 or 3763		THE Israelites rendezvous at Rameses; cross the Red Sea, &c.	1491 or 1648	
2514	3764	The law delivered from Sinai, &c.	1490	1647
2515	3765	The Israelites approach Canaan; the priesthood established, &c.	1489	1646
2553	3805	The Israelites enter Canaan, and possess it.	1451	1608

PERIOD V.

From the Israelites entering into Canaan to the building of Solomon's temple, in all 447 years; according to Dr Hales 581 years.

Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.
2553 or 3803		JOSHUA succeeds Moses as the leader of Israel.	1451 or 1608	
2561	3829	The Israelites conquer Canaan, &c.	1443	1582
2599	3849	The war of the Benjamites.	1405	1561
2469	3985	The judges, Deborah, Ehud, &c.	1535	1426
2519	4045	Gideon the Israelitish general.	1485	1366
2632	4158	Jephtha's exploits and vow.	1372	1253
2663	4189	Samson's miraculous acts.	1341	1222
2723	4259	The birth of Samuel.	1271	1152
2745	4301	Saul elected king of Israel.	1259	1110
2785	4341	David succeeds to Saul.	1219	1070
2819	4375	His restoration after Absalom's rebellion. Solomon proclaimed king.	1185	1036

PERIOD VI.

From the Building of the Temple to the Babylonish Captivity, 400 years; according to Hales, 414 years and 6 months.

Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.	
3001 or 4391		THE dedication of the temple.				1003 or 1020		
3029	4421	The death of Solomon, succession of Rehoboam, and revolt of the ten tribes.				971	991	
KINGS OF JUDAH for 388 years.					KINGS OF ISRAEL for 264 years.			
Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.	Ann. Mun.	Hales.	Ant. Chr.	Hales.
3029 or 4421		Rehoboam, intending to make war with the tribes, is diverted from it by a prophet.	971 or 990		3030 or 4421		970 or 990	
3032	4424	He gives himself up to impiety.	970	987				
3046	4438	Dies; and is succeeded by his son Abijah.	954	978				
3047	4439	Abijah's victory over Jeroboam.	953	972	3047	4439	953	972
3049	4441	He dies; and is succeeded by his son Asa, who suppresses the idolatry that had been introduced into the kingdom of Judah.	951	970	3050	4443	950	968
3064	4471	He engages Benhadad, king of Syria, to invade the territories of Baasha, king of Israel, in order to make him quit his undertaking at Ramah.	936	940	3054	4445	946	966
					3074	4468	926	943
					3075	4469	925	942
					3079	4473	921	938
					3086	4480	914	931
3090	4482	The death of Asa, and succession of his son Jehoshaphat, who expels all sorts of superstitious worship out of his dominions.	910	929	3096	4503	904	908
					3103	4514	897	897
3107	4514	Jehoshaphat accompanies Ahab in his expedition against Ramoth-Gilead, and is in danger of being slain.	893	897	3107	4502	893	909
3108	4515	He equips a fleet for Ophir, but miscarries in the voyage. Elijah is this year translated in a fiery chariot.	892	896	3108	4504	892	907

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

KINGS OF JUDAH.				KINGS OF ISRAEL.				
Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.	Ann. Mun.	Hales.	Ant. Chr.	Hales.
3115 or 4507		The death of Jehoshaphat; and his son Jehoram's succession to the crown.	885 or 904		3109 or 4520	Elisha foretels the victory of the army of the Israelites, and procures plenty of water for them.	891 or 891	
3116	4515	Jehoram introduces idolatry into Judah; is smitten with an incurable disease; dies; and is succeeded by his son Ahaziah.	884	896				
3119	4515	Homer about this time flourished.	881	896	3119	4526 The siege of Samaria by Benhadad, wherein he and his army are seized with a panic fear, and break up in confusion at night.	881	885
3120	4516	Ahaziah accompanies Jehoram, king of Israel, to the siege of Ramoth-Gilead, and being afterwards put to death, by the order of Jehu, his kingdom is usurped by his mother Athaliah, who destroys all the royal family, except young Joash.	880	895	3120	4516 Jehoram is wounded at Ramoth-Gilead, and after that slain by Jehu, who usurps the crown.	880	895
3147	4522	Athaliah is put to death, and Joash, being seated on the throne, repairs the ruins of the temple.	853	889	3148	4544 The death of Jehu, and succession of his son Jehoahaz.	852	867
3164	4562	Joash orders the high priest Zechariah to be slain in the temple; wages war with Hazael, king of Syria; is forced to give him large sums of money; is murdered by his servants, and is succeeded by his son Amaziah.	836	849	3165	4561 The death of Jehoahaz, and succession of his son Joash. Elisha dies about this time.	835	850
3178	4591	Amaziah declares war against Joash, king of Israel, and is defeated; he dies; (interregnum here of 11 years;) and is succeeded by his son Uzziah, otherwise called Azariah, in whose reign the prophets Isaiah and Amos arise in the kingdom of Judah.	822	820	3168	4579 The death of Hazael, king of Syria, and succession of his son Benhadad, who wars against Joash.	822	832
3189	4602		810	809	3178	4576 Joash obtains a great victory over Amaziah king of Judah.	812	833
					3179	4577 He dies; and is succeeded by his son Jeroboam II. in whose reign the prophets Jonah, Hosea, and Amos prophesied in Israel.	821	834
						The Olympic games were instituted this year.		
					3225	4618 The death of Jeroboam II. and a long interregnum of 22 years.	775	793
					3232	4640 Zechariah, the son of Jeroboam, at length obtains the kingdom, but, after a reign of six months, is killed by Shallum, who, after a reign of one month, is killed by Menahem, who dies, and is succeeded by his son Pekahiah.	768	771
					3233	4641	767	770
					3242	4651	757	760
					3245	4653 Pekahiah is assassinated by Pekah, who succeeds him.	755	758
					3249	4660 The city of Rome began to be built.	751	751
3246	4654	The death of Uzziah, and succession of his son Jotham, in whose reign Isaiah and Hosea prophesied.	754	757	3254	4665 Arbaces, governor of Media, (who in Scripture is called Tiglath-Pileser) and Belesis (otherwise called Nabonassar) conspire against Sardanapalus, king of Assyria, and having besieged	746	756

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

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KINGS OF JUDAH.

Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.
3262 or 4670		The death of Jotham, and succession of his son Ahaz, who is invaded by Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, and at length invites to his assistance Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, submitting to pay him tribute.	738 or 741	
3278	4686	Ahaz dies; and is succeeded by his son Hezekiah, who restores the true worship of God (which Ahaz had almost quite subverted) in Judah and Jerusalem.	722	725
3285 or 4696		Salmaneser dies; and is succeeded by Sennacherib, who invades the kingdom of Judah, and takes several of its cities.	715 or 715	
3291	4686	Hezekiah's sickness and recovery. He gives money to Sennacherib, who still continues the war against him, but, at length, loses all his army by the stroke of an angel; whereupon the Medes revolt from his dominion, and at his return to Nineveh, he is put to death by two of his sons, and succeeded by a third, named Esarhaddon.	709	725
3306	4715	Hezekiah dies; and is succeeded by his son Manasseh.	694	696
3323	4734	Esarhaddon makes himself master of Babylon, and reunites the Assyrian and Babylonish empire.	677	677
3329	4740	He takes Manasseh prisoner, and carries him in chains to Babylon.	671	671

KINGS OF ISRAEL.

Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.
3254 or 4665		him in Nineveh for three years, compels him at last to burn himself and all his riches in his own palace; whereupon Tiglath-Pileser is acknowledged king of Assyria, and Nabonassar lays the foundation of the Babylonish empire.	746 or 756	
3264	4673	Tiglath-Pileser overcomes Rezin, king of Syria, and puts him to death; then enters the land of Israel; takes many cities, and carries away a great number of captives.	736	738
3265	4683	Hosea, the son of Elah, puts Pekah, king of Israel, to death, and usurps the throne.	735	728
3276	4687	Tiglath-Pileser dies; and is succeeded by Salmaneser, who invades the kingdom of Israel, and makes Hoshea tributary to him.	724	724
3279	4692	Hoshea, king of Israel, thinking to shake off the yoke of Salmaneser, makes an alliance with So, or Sabacon, king of Egypt; whereupon Salmaneser besieges Samaria, and, after three years, takes it, and carries away the people captive, and so extinguishes the kingdom of Israel, after it had subsisted from the separation 264 years.	721	719
3347 or 4758		Holofernes invades Judea, and is slain by Judith.	653 or 653	
3361	4770	Manasseh, after his return from Babylon, dies; and is succeeded by his son Ammon.	639	641
3363	4772	Ammon is murdered by his servants; and succeeded by his son Josiah, in whose reign Zephaniah prophesied.	637	639
3370	4772	Josiah endeavours to reform several abuses that had been introduced; and restores the true worship of God.	630	639
3376	4783	At this time Jeremiah begins to prophecy.	624	628
3394	4803	Josiah is slain in battle against Necho, king of Egypt; (whereupon Jeremiah composes his book of Lamentations) and is succeeded first by Jehoahaz, and after him by Jehoiakim, in whose reign Habakkuk prophesied.	606	608
3398	4825	Nebuchadnezzar takes Jerusalem,	620	586

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.		Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.
3398 or 4809		and carries Daniel and his companions, captives, into Babylon.	602 or 602			3523 or 4926		Xerxes invades Greece, succeeded by Artaxerxes, called in Scripture Ahasuerus.	471 or 485	
3402	4819	Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great statue.	598	592		3544	4947	Ezra is made governor of Judea.	460	464
3404	4815	The history of Susanna at Babylon, and Jehoiakim's revolt against Nebuchadnezzar.	596	596		3556	4967	Nehemiah governs Judea 12 years.	448	444
3405	4812	The birth of Cyrus, and the death of Jehoiakim, whose body is thrown into the highway, without any burial; and the succession of Jeconiah, who (after a short reign) is taken, and carried to Babylon, while his uncle Zedekiah is left at Jerusalem in his place.	595	599		3648	5055	Alexander the Great born at Pella.	352	356
3410	4821	Ezekiel begins to prophecy in Chaldea, and foretels the destruction of Jerusalem.	590	590		3667	5070	The temple on Mount Gerizzim begins to be built by Manasseh.	337	341
3412	4823	Zedekiah confederates with the king of Egypt, and revolts against Nebuchadnezzar.	588	588		3681	5092	Alexander dies, and the Grecian begins.	319	319
3414	4825	Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem; defeats the Egyptian army; takes the city, and utterly destroys it, with the temple; puts out Zedekiah's eyes; carries him to Babylon; and sends the Jews, that were left in the country, captive beyond the Euphrates. And thus ended the kingdom of Judea, after it had subsisted, from the time of the separation, 388 years.	586	586		3716	5127	Ptolemy Philadelphus, under whom the Scriptures were translated, begins his reign in Egypt.	284	284
					3844	5247	Death of Antiochus Epiphanes.	160	164	
					3902	5305	Death of Hyrcanus, rise of the Jewish sects.	92	106	
					3930	5333	Death of Alexander Jannæus.	74	78	
					3939	5342	Upon Alexander's death, Aristobulus seizes the kingdom of Judea.	65	69	
					3998	5394	Herod kills his two sons.	2	3	
					4000	5411	The birth of our Blessed Lord and Saviour.			

MEDIAN AND PERSIAN
DYNASTY.

3447	4858	Darius the Mede or Cyaxares.	553	553
3449	4860	Cyrus the Persian.	555	551
3464	4875	Takes Babylon the first year of his reign. The same year the Jews return under Zorobabel. The first high priest Joshua, same year.		
3465	4876	The second temple begun.	555	535
3471	4882	Cambyzes reigns.	529	529
3479	4890	Darius Hystaspes.	521	521
3484	4895	Temple finished.	516	516
3515	4926	Xerxes.	485	485
3517	4928	High priest Jehoiakim.	483	483
3536	4947	Artaxerxes Longimanus.	464	464
3537	4948	Stops the rebuilding of Jerusalem.	463	463
3540	4951	Artaxerxes marries Esther.	460	460
3543	4954	Sends Ezra to Judea.	457	457
3547	4958	High priest Eliashib. Nehemiah Governor, as before.	453	453
3577	4988	Darius Nothus.	423	423
3580	4991	Nehemiah's reform. End of the Old Testament canon.	420	420

PERIOD VII.

From the Babylonish Captivity to the Birth of Christ, in all 588 years; according to Dr Hales, 586.

Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.
3416 or 4827		GEDALIAH is made governor of the people left in Judea, and is murdered by Ishmael.	584 or 586	
3468	4875	Cyrus puts an end to the 70 years captivity, granting the Jews liberty to return to their country.	536	536
3488	4895	Temple finished.	516	516
3479	4882	Death of Cyrus, succeeded by Cambyzes, Smerdis the Magian, in Scripture called Artaxerxes, succeeds Cambyzes the same year.	525	529
3483	4890	Darius makes a decree in favour of the Jews.	517	521
3517	4928	The high priest Jehoiakim.	487	483

PERIOD VIII.

From the birth of Christ to the completion of the canon of the New Testament: in all about 97 years.

Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.
4004 or 5411		The Vulgar Era is 4 years short of the computation generally	0 or 1	

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

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Ann. Mun.	Hales.		Ant. Chr.	Hales.	Ann. Mun.	Hales.	Ant. Chr.	Hales.
4004 or 5411		received, and 5 behind that of Dr Hales, as in the column annexed.		0 or 1	3709	5120	292	291
4033	5437	Our Lord is baptized by John	29	26	3724	5135	276	276
4034	5438	Our Lord chuses several disciples.	30	27	3750	5161	250	250
4035	5440	Our Lord's first Journey to Jerusalem.	31	28	3783	5194	217	217
4036	5441	Our Lord's last journey to Jerusalem.	32	29	3805	5216	195	195
4037	5442	Our Lord's transfiguration.	33	30	3825	5236	175	175
4038	5444	The apostles begin their ministry.	34	32	3828	5237	172	172
4040	5446	Conversion of St Paul.	36	33	ASMONÆAN PRINCES OR MACCABEES.			
4061	5454	His shipwreck, &c.	58	43	3837	5241	163	163
4066	5462	Writes several of his epistles, &c.	66	51	3837	5248	163	163
4069	5473	The Jewish rebellion.	69	62	3840	4251	160	160
4075	5479	Jerusalem totally destroyed.	72	68	3847	5258	153	153
PERSIAN DYNASTY.					3857	5268	143	148
JEWISH HIGH PRIESTS.					3864	5275	136	136
From Nehemiah's reform to the birth of John the Baptist,— 415 years.					3894	5305	106	106
3580	4991	Eliashib.	420	420	3895	5306	105	105
3587	4998	Joiada or Judas.	413	413	3922	5333	78	78
3627	4038	Jonathan or John.	373	373	3931	5342	69	69
3659	5070	Jaddua or Jaddus.	341	341	3931	5342	69	69
MACEDO-GRECIAN DYNASTY.					ROMAN DYNASTY.			
JEWISH HIGH PRIESTS.					3937	5848	63	63
3679	5000	Onias.	321	321	3737	5348	63	63
3700	5111	Simon the Just.	300	300	3960	5371	40	40
					3963	5396	37	37
					3995	5396	5	5
					From his birth to the destruction of Jerusalem, 75 years.			
					Nativity of our Lord about autumn.			
					Passover, A. D 25, &c. Jerusalem destroyed.			

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ERRATA.

IN a Work extending through three closely printed quarto volumes, a few typographical errors will be readily forgiven, especially when it is known that the Editor resided at a distance from the press. The gentleman who undertook to write the Index to this Work, offered, at the same time, to point out to me all such errors as he should observe when turning over the pages for his own purpose; but as he has pointed out none, I suppose he observed none. The following table, I trust, contains all such errors of any importance as are to be found in those parts of it for which I alone am answerable; and the candid reader will not be surprised, that, relying on the vigilance of another, I paid less attention to the *typographical* errors that may be found in the History itself, than otherwise I should certainly have done. These errors, however, are probably neither numerous nor great.

VOLUME I.

INTRODUCTION, p. vii. note, 2 col. 3 line from bottom, for *Van Miderts* read *Van Mildert's*.

p. ix. line 9. for *men* read *man*.

p. x. note, last line from bottom, for *Verum* read *Veram*.

p. xv. line 12. for *men* read *man*.

p. xviii. 5th line from top, for *cermonies* read *ceremonies*.

P. 4. line 8th from top, for *sublinary* read *sublunary*.

— note, col. 2. line 2. for *teached* read *reached*.

— 8. line 14. insert *genere* after *literaturæ*.

— 15. line 4. from top, for *inquitive* read *inquisitive*.

— 75. line 39. for *Palagians* read *Pelagians*.

— 76. note, line penult. for *anualist* read *analyst*.

— 92. note *, line 1. for *word* read *words*.

— 93. line 4. for *clear* read *clean*.

— 97. line 13. for *affectation* read *affection*.

— 99. note, line 3. from the bottom, for *pœnem* read *pœnam*.

— 147. line 25. for *corrector* read *correcter*.

— 219. note, line 6. from the bottom, for *Phulig* read *Phaleg*.

— 241. line 8. from the bottom, for the *second* read the *first* book, &c.

— 242. line 33. for *Bela, Rama* read *Bala-Rama*.

— 296. note * line 1. read "This is not correct."

— 313. line 6. for *was* read *were*.

— 466. note *, line 4. from the bottom, for *Hiphill* read *Hiphil*.

— 489. line 21. for *know* read *knew*.

— 492. note, line penult. for *propiceo* read *propius*.

— 614. note, line 4. for *statuem Bael* read *statuam Baal*.

— 616. line 16. for *דָּוִד* read *דָּוִד*.

— 616. line 29. for *Omen* read *Oman*.

— 619. line 22. for *id circo* read *idcirco*—(one word.)

VOLUME II.

P. 49. line 8. from the bottom, *dele* the words *from all which*.

— 49. line 11. from the bottom, for *דָּוִד* read *דָּוִד*.

— 284. note *, line penult, for *historical* read *historian's*.

— 327. note *, lines 28, and 29. for *miricles* read *miracles*.

— 390. line 18. insert *as* after *considered*.

— 426. line 19. for *take words* read *take the words*.

— 470. note *, line 9. for *Iphetus* read *Iphilus*.

— 493. note †, line 10, for *Medea* read *Media*.

— 495. lines 7, 8, 9. for *Medea* read *Media*.

ERRATA.

- P. 530. lines 17. and 16. from the bottom of note *, for *Artephrenes* and *Intephernes* read *Artaphernes* and *Intaphernes*.
 — 584. note *, col. 2. line 20. for *or* read *as*.
 — 642. note *, line ult. for *Herm. Apost.* read *Harm. Apost.*
 — 678. note, col. 1. line 5. from the bottom, for *Khesku* read *Khosru*.
 ————— 4. ————— for *Turen* read *Turan*.
 ————— 3. ————— for *Choresen* read *Chorasan*.
 ————— col. 2. line 3. from the top, for *Turenians* read *Turanians*.
 ————— for *Irenians* read *Iranians*.
 ————— 7. ————— for *Lohoresk* read *Lohorasp*.
 — 680. note †, col. 2. line 6. for *Zebiism* read *Zabiism*.
 — 681. note continued, line 4, for *Sedder* read *Sadder*.
 ————— for *Zendoiste* read *Zendavesta*.
 ————— note †, line 4, for *friend* read *fraud*.

VOLUME III.

- INTRODUCTION, p. x. line 36. for *those* read *these*.
 p. xi. line 6. from the bottom, for *set* read *sat*.
 p. xvii. line 24. for *author* read *authors*.
 p. xx. line 23. for *gives* read *give*.
 p. xxv. line 2. for *retundity* read *rotundity*.
 p. xxvii. line 12. from the bottom, for *would* read *should*.

- P. 13. last note, for *Toldeih* read *Toldoth*.
 ————— for *Cedranus* read *Cedrenus*.
 ————— — last line, for *vol. iii.* read *vol. ii.*
 — 85. line 8. for *their* read *this*.
 — 98. line 5. for *whom* read *which*.
 — 103. line 26. for *would* read *should*.
 — 104. line 19. for *at* read *of*.
 — 365. note §, line ult. for *alteras* read *alteros*.
 — 367. note *, line 7. for *valuisse* read *voluisse*.
 ————— 20. for *aliu* read *alia*.

It has been suggested by a learned and candid friend, that the terms in which I have controverted (p. 103 of this volume) Mr Archdeacon Churton's defence of what has been called the *copying hypothesis*, may be understood in a sense likely to wound his feelings. I hardly think that they will be so understood by himself; and I beg leave to assure the public that nothing has been farther from my intention than to wound the feelings of any respectable character. My unfeigned esteem for the Archdeacon of St David's, to whom I am not unknown, I have declared in some preceding pages of the same dissertation; but as I do not expect him to adopt implicitly any opinion of mine, I am sure that he does not even wish me to pay such undue deference to his.

N. B. Owing to circumstances, which, though to me of some importance and unavoidable, were such as could not interest the public, there is an apparent confusion in some of the chronological dates at the tops of the different pages of this volume. This confusion, however, the reader will find no difficulty in removing, if he keep in mind that the letters A. D. or the words Ann. Dom. always refer to the commencement of the vulgar era; that our Lord was in reality born four or five years before that epoch; that as he first visited the temple when twelve years of age, that visit must have been made in the seventh or eighth year of the vulgar era; and that as he was baptized, when about thirty years of age, his baptism must have taken place in the twenty-sixth or twenty-seventh year of the same era. As I have introduced no other chronology than the vulgar and that of Dr Hales, the reader will therefore be pleased, at page 16, and thenceforward, to read, instead of the words *ante vulg. era*, or *vulg. era*, the words *according to Dr Halès*.

I beg leave likewise to say, that as the different Indexes to this Work were not compiled by me, nor even according to the plan which I recommended, I can lay no claim whatever to the merit which they may display, nor be in any degree made justly answerable for their defects.

